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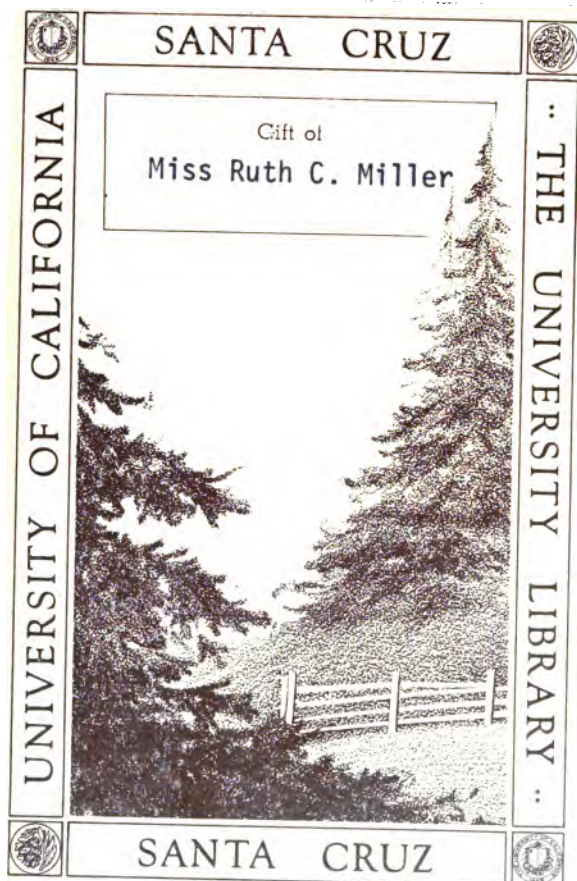
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RICHARD BRINSLEY BUTLER SHERIDAN

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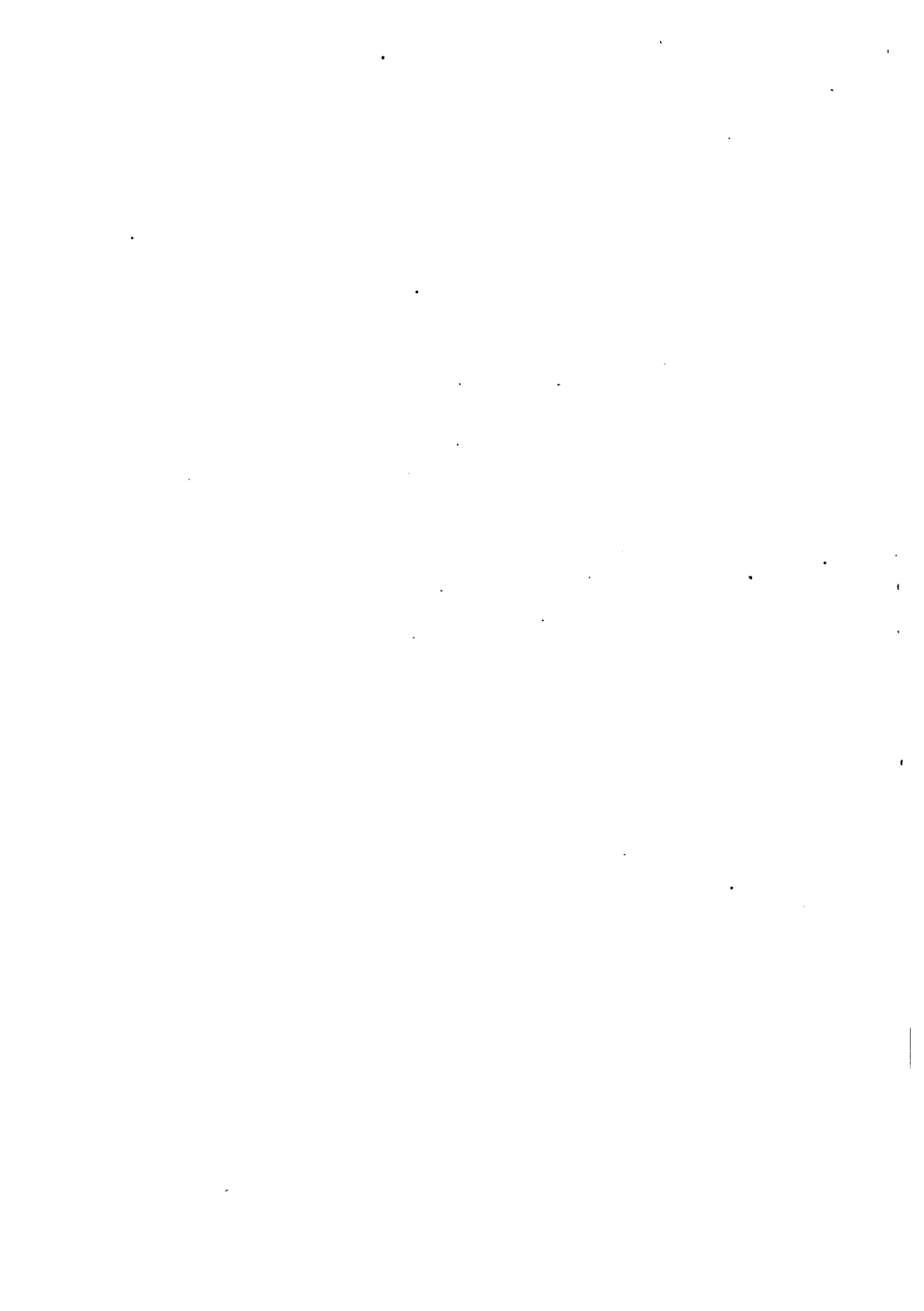
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GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND



SHERIDAN

RICHARD BRINSLEY BUTLER SHERIDAN was born at Dublin in 1751. He was the second son of Thomas Sheridan, who had been an excellent actor, and who subsequently became a distinguished educationist. The boy Richard was sent to Harrow. After leaving school at the age of seventeen, he was entered at the Middle Temple, but paid less attention to legal studies than to literature. It was in 1775, when he was less than twenty-four years old, that his first comedy, "The Rivals," was produced at Covent Garden. The original defects of the play, which caused it to be received somewhat coldly on the first night, were remedied before the second performance, and the piece at once took that place upon the stage which it has never lost. In the course of the same year Sheridan wrote the comic opera of "The Duenna," which had the longest run recorded up to that time. "The School for Scandal" was produced in the spring of 1777, and had, it is well known, extraordinary success. Two years later appeared "The Critic," which is supposed to afford the highest proof of Sheridan's skill as a dramatist. The only dramatic composition which belongs to the remaining thirty-six years of his life was "Pizarro," produced in 1799. He entered Parliament in 1780. His first speech, like Disraeli's, was a failure, but he persevered, and, presently, took a place among the best speakers in the House. The occasion that gave him a chance of rising out of the ranks of effective debaters and attaining the repute of a great parliamentary orator, was the impeachment of Warren Hastings. Of some of the speeches delivered by him in the course of the proceedings only brief abstracts have been preserved, but, with regard to the second, or four days' speech in Westminster Hall, posterity has been more fortunate. The speech is here reproduced. The closing years of Sheridan's life were full of painful passages upon which no one could wish to linger. He died in 1817.

SPEECH ON SUMMING UP THE EVIDENCE AGAINST WARREN HASTINGS ON THE BEGUM CHARGE

TUESDAY, JUNE 3

MR. SHERIDAN said it was not his intention to trespass upon their lordships' attention for any length of time, in the consideration of the charge immediately before them, by making many preliminary observations. Such general remarks as it was in his power to

make would only weaken what had been already urged by the right honorable gentleman who was the principal mover of the impeachment—whose genius exceeded everything but his disposition—who understood and felt for all—through whom and by whom so great an *embodied stand* had been made in defence of the “rights of man” against “man’s oppression.” He might, however, without injury to the general cause, and without exposing too much of their lordships’ patience, say a few words, both upon the subject of the impeachment in general, and the particular situation of himself and his honorable colleagues who had been appointed to conduct it.

He thought, that if ever there was a prosecution in which those who carried it on were free from all unwarrantable resentment, or improper bias, it was the present. He could speak from his own heart, and declare most solemnly, that he found there no private incentive to the part he had taken in this impeachment; and he verily believed he might safely say that all his honorable colleagues, as well as himself, were actuated solely by the zeal they felt for the public welfare, and their honest solicitude for the honor of their country, and the happiness of those who were under its dominion and protection. With such subjects in view, he really lost sight of Mr. Hastings; who, however great in other respects, was too insignificant to be mixed with such important considerations. “The unfortunate gentleman at the bar is no mighty object in my mind. Amid the series of mischiefs, to my sense, seeming to surround him, what is he but a petty *nucleus*, involved in its *lamina*, scarcely seen or thought of?” It was impossible, therefore, that his honorable colleagues or himself should feel themselves under the influence of

malice or ill-will toward the object of the prosecution; they acted solely under a delegated power; they stood at their lordships' bar as the representatives of the Commons of England; and as they acted in that public capacity, it might as well be said that the Commons of Great Britain, in whose name the impeachment had been brought before their lordships, were actuated by malice to the prisoner, as that the managers of the House of Commons had any private spleen to gratify in discharging the duty imposed upon them by their principals. In truth, the prosecution was not "begotten in prejudice, or nursed in error." It was founded in the clearest conviction of the wrongs which the natives of Hindustan had suffered through the maladministration of those in whose hands the country had placed extensive powers, which ought to have been exercised for the benefit of the governed, but which had been used by the prisoner at the bar for the shameful purposes of oppression.

To convince their lordships that the British government—which ought to have been a blessing to the powers in India connected with it—had been a scourge to the natives, and the cause of desolation to the most flourishing provinces in Hindustan, he had only to read a letter that had been received not long since from Lord Cornwallis, the present Governor-General of Bengal. In that letter the noble lord stated he had been received by the Nabob Vizier with every mark of friendship and respect; but the honors he received at the court of Lucknow had not prevented him from seeing the desolation that overspread the face of the country, the sight of which had shocked his very soul. He spoke to the Nabob on the subject, and earnestly recommended it to him to adopt some system of government that might restore the prosperity of his kingdom, and make

his people happy. The Nabob's answer was strikingly remarkable. That degraded prince said to his lordship, that as long as the demands of the English Government upon the revenue of Oude should remain unlimited, he (the Nabob) could have no interest in establishing any system of economy; and while the English should continue to interfere in the internal government of his country, it would be in vain for him to attempt any salutary reform; for his subjects knew he was only a cipher in his own dominions, and therefore laughed at and despised his authority and that of his ministers.

Surely the state to which that wretched prince was reduced by our mismanagement, and the ruin which had, by the same cause, been brought upon his country, called loudly upon their lordships to interfere, and rescue their national honor and character from the infamy to which both would be exposed, if no inquiry was made into the causes of such calamities, and no punishment was inflicted on the authors of them. Policy, as well as justice, called upon them to vindicate the character of Great Britain in India; for he would prove to them, from good authority, that the native powers had so little reliance upon our faith, that the preservation of our empire in that quarter of the world could be effected only by convincing the native princes that a religious adherence to its engagements should, in future, characterize the British Government in that country. To prove the necessity there was for bringing such a conviction to the mind of every native prince, Mr. Sheridan read a letter addressed to Lord Cornwallis, from Captain Kirkpatrick, who, when he wrote it, was resident at the court of the great Mahratta chief, Madajee Scindia. This gentleman stated in his letter that the

new system of moderation brought about by his lordship was certainly the only one that could give stability to our empire in India; but at the same time, he must observe, that as the princes of that country had so frequently had cause to lament that no engagement could bind us, it would require time, and repeated proofs of good faith, to convince them that we were serious in the professions which were then held out to them on the part of the British Government; that ambition, or a desire of conquest, should no longer be encouraged by British councils—and that strict adherence to all treaties and engagements should be the basis of all our future political transactions.

To these letters, Mr. Sheridan said, he must call upon their lordships to give an answer—not by words, for they will find no credit with the natives, who had so often been deceived by our professions; but by deeds, which would convince them that we were truly in earnest; for it was only by our punishing those who have been guilty of the delinquencies which have brought ruin on the country, that we could possibly gain confidence with the people of India, and satisfy them that future delinquents will not be encouraged or countenanced by the ruling powers at home.

In looking round for an object fit to be held out to the world as an example of national justice, their lordships must necessarily fix their eyes upon Mr. Hastings. He was the great cause of the degradation of our character in India, and of the oppression of its devoted inhabitants; and he was the only victim that could atone for the calamities he had occasioned.

But while he pointed out the prisoner at the bar as a proper object of punishment, he begged leave to observe, that he did not wish to turn the sword of justice against

that man, merely because an example ought to be made; such a wish was as far from his heart as it was incompatible with equity and justice. If he called for punishment upon Mr. Hastings, it was because he thought him a great delinquent; and the greatest of all those who, by their rapacity and oppression, had brought ruin on the natives of India, and disgrace upon the inhabitants of Great Britain.

While he called for justice upon the prisoner, he could wish also to do him justice. He would be sorry that the weight and consequence of the Commons of Great Britain, in whose name the prosecution had been set on foot, should operate to his prejudice. Indeed, while he had such upright judges as their lordships, it was impossible that anything could injure him but the clearest and most unequivocal proofs of guilt.—“It is not the peering suspicion of apprehending guilt—it is not any popular abhorrence of its widespread consequences—it is not the secret consciousness in the bosom of the judge, which can excite the vengeance of the law, and authorize its infliction! No—in this good land, as high as it is happy, because as just as it is free, all is definite, equitable, and exact—the laws must be satisfied before infliction ensues—and ere a hair of the head can be plucked, *legal guilt* must be established by *legal proof!*”

This principle must be admitted as conclusive; though, in the present case, he felt the inconvenience of it, which might operate as a bar to public justice; for the managers of the impeachment labored under difficulties that could scarcely occur in any other prosecution. The witnesses whom they had been obliged to call were for the most part (he would state the exceptions in the proper place)

the accomplices of the prisoner's guilt and the instruments of his oppressions. From such witnesses it was not likely that proofs of guilt could be obtained without difficulty.

In the written documents from which the managers had selected their proofs in support of the impeachment, considerable difficulties had occurred—those documents had been drawn up by the parties whose study it was, as it was their interest—though contrary to their duty—to conceal the iniquity of their proceedings, and, consequently, to disguise the truth.

But though he stated the difficulties which the managers had to encounter, he did not mean to say that the proofs which they had adduced were in any degree defective. "Weak, no doubt, in some parts, and incompetent—and yet more deplorable, as undistinguished by any compunctious visitings of repenting accomplices—but yet enough, and enough in sure validity, to abash the front of guilt no longer hid, and flash conviction on conscientious judges."

Having premised these observations, Mr. Sheridan said he would now make some remarks upon the defence, or rather defences, made by the prisoner. He had already made four, three of which he had since thought proper to abandon and discredit. Indeed, he believed it was a novelty in the history of criminal jurisprudence, that a person accused should first make a defence, and afterward endeavor to convince his judges that they ought not to attach to it the least credit. Mr. Sheridan said he was the more surprised at this conduct in the prisoner, as it was since he had had the assistance of counsel that he had made this attempt; he thought, that when he had been rescued from his own incautious rashness, he would

not have taken so extraordinary a step as that of discrediting his own defence.

In every court of law in England, the confession of a criminal, when not obtained by any promise of favor or lenity, or by violent threats, was always admitted as conclusive evidence against himself; and if that confession was made before a grave and respectable assembly of persons, competent to take cognizance of crimes, there was no doubt but it would have due weight, because it was fair to presume that such a confession must be voluntary, and not procured by any undue or improper means. The prisoner had, in his defence made before the House of Commons, admitted many facts; and it was the intention of the managers to urge in support of the charges his admission of them. For when he went the length of admitting them, he was speaking the language, not of inconsiderate rashness and haste, but of deliberate consideration and reflection, as would appear to their lordships from a passage which he should read to them, from the introduction to the defence read by Mr. Hastings himself at the bar of the House of Commons. In that passage the prisoner used the following words:

"Of the discouragement to which I allude, I shall mention but two points, and these it is incumbent on me to advert to, because they relate to effects which the justice of this honorable House may, and I trust will, avert. The first is an objection to my being at all committed in my defence; since, in so wide a field for discussion, it would be impossible not to admit some things of which an advantage might be taken, to turn them in evidence against myself; whereas, another might as well use, as I could, or better, the same materials of my defence,

without involving me in the same consequences. But I am sure that this honorable House will yield me its protection against the cavils of unwarranted inference; and if the *truth* can tend to convict me, *I am content to be MYSELF the channel to convey it.* The other objection lay in my own breast. It was not till Monday last that I formed the resolution; and I knew not then whether I might not in consequence be laid under the obligation of preparing and completing in five days (and in effect so it has proved) the refutation of charges which it has been the labor of my accuser, armed with all the powers of Parliament, to compile during as many years of almost undisturbed leisure."

Here, then, Mr. Sheridan observed, the prisoner had, upon deliberation, committed his defence to paper; and after having had five days to consider whether he should present it or not, he actually delivered it himself to the House of Commons, as a defence founded in *truth*; and triumphantly remarked upon it, that if "*truth* could tend to convict him, he was willing to be himself the channel to convey it."

But what was his language now that he had had the advice of counsel? Why, that there was not a word of truth in what he delivered to the House of Commons as the *truth*; that he had no knowledge of many of the facts, no recollection of the circumstances; that he had put his memory in commission, and appointed Messrs. Middleton, Scott, Gilpin, etc., the commissioners; nay, that he had also put his defences into commission, to be exercised by the same gentlemen. "These, like raw materials, the master-workman distributes about him to all hands waiting. His words are to be strung—arguments spun—pas-

sages are to be woven. He puts his conscience into departments; Major Scott, says he, take care of my consistency; Mr. Middleton, you have my memory in commission! Prove me a financier, Mr. Shore. Answer for me, Mr. Holt (all journeymen, good enough for the House of Commons, though not for your lordships). Help, one and all, to bear me up under the bare pressure of my laurels, the burden of my glory! Refreshen, and save me from the calentures of my state, from the peril of my own panegyric."

Thus could the prisoner sport with the understanding and feelings of the House, by asserting that to be false and not entitled to credit to-day, which, on a former, he had declared to be the truth itself, and the ground of his hope that it would procure him an acquittal; or what would have been the same thing to him, would prevent the Commons from carrying up the impeachment against him to their lordships' bar. Indeed, this avowal and disavowal of defences, and from the defence differing from all the former which had been delivered to their lordships, it would seem as if Mr. Hastings was of opinion that anything would do for the House of Commons. Possibly it might subsequently prove that he entertained a similar opinion with respect to their lordships; for it was not improbable but he might hereafter abandon the defence he had delivered to them: he might say, "It was not made by me, but by my counsel, and therefore I hope your lordships give no credit to it." But if he would abide by that his last defence, he (Mr. Sheridan) would join issue with him upon it, and prove it to be in many places void of truth, and in almost every part of it unfounded in argument as well as fact.

Having thus alluded to the different defences made by the prisoner, Mr. Sheridan next adverted to the allegations in the second charge that had been supported in evidence. He said, that the managers had proved the high birth and great rank of the Begums, or Princesses of Oude; they had also proved from the evidence of Sir Elijah Impey, Mr. Middleton, Mr. Goring, and others, how sacred was the residence of women in India. A threat, therefore, to force that residence, and violate its purity by sending armed men into it, was a species of torture, the cruelty of which could not be conceived by those who were unacquainted with the customs and notions of the inhabitants of Hindustan. A knowledge of the customs and manners of the Mussulmans of Turkey would not enable one to judge of those of Mussulmans in India: in the former, ladies went abroad veiled, and though not so free as those in Christian countries, still they were not so closely shut up as were the ladies professing the same religion in Hindustan. The confinement of the Turkish ladies was in a great measure to be ascribed to the jealousy of their husbands; in Hindustan the ladies were confined, because they thought it contrary to decorum that persons of their sex should be seen abroad: they were not the victims of jealousy in the men; on the contrary, their sequestration from the world was voluntary; they liked retirement, because they thought it best suited to the dignity of their sex and situation: they were shut up from liberty, it was true; but liberty, so far from having any charms for them, was derogatory to their feelings; they were enshrined rather than immured; they professed a greater purity of pious prejudice than the Mohammedan ladies of Europe and other countries; and

more zealously and religiously practiced a more holy system of superstition. Such was their sense of delicacy, that to them the sight of man was pollution; and the piety of the nation rendered their residence a sanctuary. What, then, would their lordships think of the tyranny of the man who could act in open defiance of those prejudices, which were so interwoven with the very existence of ladies in that country, that they could not be removed but by death? What, he asked, would their lordships think of the man who could threaten to profane and violate the sanctuary of the highest description of ladies in Oude, by saying that he would storm it with his troops, and remove the inhabitants from it by force?

Mr. Sheridan dwelt for some time with great feeling on this point. He next adverted to the treasures in the Zenana, and the relation in which the Bow Begum and the Nabob stood to each other, and to Mr. Hastings. He adduced various arguments to show that these treasures did not belong to the state, but to the Begum; and most happily ridiculed the memory of Mr. Middleton, that remembered inferences but forgot the facts that would support them; nay, sometimes remembered the facts that overturned them. Thus, he said, the treasures must have belonged to the state, and consequently were the inheritance of the Nabob, because that prince had drawn for a large sum which was to be paid out of those treasures, but his draft was not honored; and he said, they could not be the property of the Begum, for he remembered, that when the Nabob's draft was returned without having been honored, the Begum drew for the same sum upon the same treasures, and the money was instantly paid.

Mr. Sheridan showed next, that there was very good

ground for presuming that the treasures possessed by the Begum were the property of that princess; she had endeared herself to her husband, the late Nabob, by flying to him in the moment of his distress, after his defeat at Buxar, and carrying with her to his relief the jewels with which, in happier days, his fondness for her had enriched her: upon these she raised him a large supply. When the political generosity of this country restored him afterward to his throne, his gratitude to his wife knew no bounds: her ascendancy over him was such, that she prevailed upon him to appoint his son *by her* his successor.

The present Nabob, as had appeared from a passage in a letter written by Mr. Hastings to him, and since proved in evidence, owed to her not only his birth and succession to the crown, but also the preservation of his life; for one day, his savage father in a rage attempting to cut him down with his cimeter, the Begum rushed between her husband and her son, and saved the latter through the loss of some of her own blood; for she was wounded by the blow that was not aimed at her. A son so befriended and so preserved, Mr. Hastings had armed against such a mother: he invaded the rights of that prince, that he might compel him to violate the laws of nature by plundering his parent; and he made him a slave, that he might afterward make him a monster. Mr. Hastings was bound to be the protector of the Begum, instead of her plunderer; for her husband, on his death-bed, bequeathed her to his friendship; and Mr. Hastings had always called that husband his brother—but no consideration could make him discharge the duties of any obligation that could set bounds to his rapacity.

The interference of Mr. Bristow in 1775, in the differ-

ence between the Begums and the Nabob, in consequence of the claims of the latter, was the next ground of Mr. Sheridan's observations. Mr. Bristow had then, in a conversation with the superior or elder Begum, thrown out an insinuation that the treasures which she possessed were the treasures of the state; and on this insinuation, so termed by Mr. Bristow himself, had Mr. Hastings founded all his arguments on that head, and on which he lately appeared to place so much reliance. The Begums at that time gave up to Asoph ul Dowlah sums amounting to £550,000. Of this a part was to be paid in goods, which, as they consisted of arms, elephants, etc., the Nabob alleged to be his property, and refused to accept as payment. This occasioned a dispute, which was referred to the board of Calcutta. Mr. Hastings then vindicated the right of the Begums to all the goods in the zenana, and brought over the majority of the council to his opinion. The ideas then placed on record he had since found it convenient to disown, as belonging not to him, but to the majority of the council!

"There are," said Mr. Sheridan, "in this assemblage, those who are perfect in their ideas of law and justice, and who understand tolerably well majorities and minorities; but how shall I instance this new doctrine of Mr. Hastings? It is as if Mr. Burke, the great leader of the cause, should some ten years hence revile the managers, and commend Mr. Hastings!" "Good God," might say one of those gentlemen, "it was *you* who instigated the inquiry; it was *you* who made me think as I did!" "Ay, very true," might Mr. Burke reply, "but I was then in a minority: I am now in a majority; I have left my opinions behind me; and I am no longer responsible."

The claims, however, it was observable, of the Nabob, as to the treasure of the Begums, were at this time the only plea alleged for the seizure. These were always founded on a passage of that Koran which was perpetually quoted, but never proved. Not a word was then mentioned of the strange rebellion which was afterward conjured up, and of which the existence and the notoriety were equally a secret!—a disaffection which was at its height at the very time when the Begums were dispensing their liberality to the Nabob, and exercising the greatest generosity to the English officers in distress!—a disturbance, in short, without its parallel in history, which was raised by two women—carried on by two eunuchs—and finally suppressed by an affidavit!

Mr. Sheridan then adverted to the negotiations of Mr. Middleton with the Begums in 1778, when the discontents of the superior Begum would have induced her to leave the country, unless her authority was sanctioned and her property secured by the guarantee of the Company. This guarantee the counsel, or Mr. Hastings, had thought it necessary to deny, as knowing that if the agreements with the elder Begum were proved, it would affix to Mr. Hastings the guilt of all the sufferings of the women of the Khord Mahal, the revenues for whose support were secured by the same engagement. In treating this part of the subject, the principal difficulty arose from the uncertain evidence of Mr. Middleton, who, though concerned in the negotiation of the four treaties, could not recollect affixing his signature to three out of that number. Mr. Sheridan proved, however, from the evidence even of Mr. Middleton, that a treaty had been signed in October, 1778, wherein the rights of the elder Begum were fully recog-

nized; a provision secured for the women and children of the late vizier in the Khord Mahal; and that these engagements had received the fullest sanction of Mr. Hastings. These facts were confirmed by the evidence of Mr. Purling, a gentleman who, Mr. Sheridan said, had delivered himself fairly, and as having no foul secrets to conceal. He had transmitted copies of these engagements in 1780 to Mr. Hastings at Calcutta; the answer returned was that in arranging the taxes on the other districts he should pass over the jaghires of the Begums. No notice was then taken of any impropriety in the transactions in 1778, nor any notice given of an intended revocation of those engagements.

But in June, 1781, when General Clavering and Colonel Monson were no more, and Mr. Francis had returned to Europe, all the hoard and arrear of collected evil burst out without restraint, and Mr. Hastings determined on his journey to the upper provinces. It was then, that without adverting to intermediate transactions, he met with the Nabob Asoph ul Dowlah at Chunar, and received from him the mysterious present of £100,000. To form a proper idea of this transaction, it was only necessary to consider the respective situation of him who gave, and of him who received this present. It was not given by the Nabob from the superflux of his wealth nor in the abundance of his esteem for the man to whom it was given. It was, on the contrary, a prodigal bounty, drawn from a country depopulated—no matter whether by natural causes, or by the grinding of oppression. It was raised by an exaction which took what calamity had spared and rapine overlooked—and pursued those angry dispensations of Providence, when a prophetic chastisement had been inflicted on a fated

realm. The secrecy which had marked this transaction was not the smallest proof of its criminality. When Benarum Pundit had, a short time before, made a present to the Company of a lac of rupees, Mr. Hastings, in his own language, deemed it "worthy the praise of being recorded"; but in this instance, when ten times that sum was given, neither Mr. Middleton nor the council were acquainted with the transaction until Mr. Hastings, four months after, felt himself compelled to write an account to England, and the intelligence returned thus circuitously to his friends in India! It was peculiarly observable in this transaction, how much the distresses of the different parties were at variance. Mr. Hastings travels to the Nabob to see, no doubt, and inquire into his distresses, but immediately takes from him £100,000, to be applied to the necessities of the distressed East India Company; but on further deliberation these considerations vanish; a third object arises more worthy than either of the former, and the money is taken from the one, and demanded from the other, to be applied to the use of—the distressed Mr. Hastings.

The money, it was alleged by Mr. Hastings, had been originally taken to discharge the arrears of the army. It had not long been applied to that use, because it was received in bills on Gopal Dos, a rich banker at Benares, who was then kept a prisoner by Cheit Sing. Major Scott being questioned on the subject, declared the bills on Gopal Dos were as good as cash, for that though the principal of the house was a prisoner, that circumstance made no difference whatsoever with the other partners. Thus Mr. Hastings was inconsistent with himself, by alleging an objection which should have prevented his taking the

money in the first instance, for the purpose he had stated; and Major Scott contradicting Mr. Hastings, removed the objection, and restored the business to its original footing. But through all those windings of mysterious hypocrisy, and of artificial concealment, it was easy to mark the sense of hidden guilt. Mr. Hastings himself, being driven from every other hold, advanced the stale plea of state necessity. But of this necessity he had brought no proof; it was a necessity which listened to whispers for the purpose of crimination, and dealt in rumor to prove its own existence. To a general leading the armies of Britain—to an admiral bearing her thunders over the seas, the plea of necessity might be indulged, if the wants of those were to be supplied whose blood had been spilled in the service of their country; but his “state necessity, grand, magnanimous, and all-commanding, went hand in hand with honor, if not with use; it went forth with our arms, when the hero could plume himself, like the imperial eagle on his nest, unassailable!—and, amid his fair successes, look down in justified disdain on any malevolent challenge of minute error; his fame as firm as the rock, which, from his defence, all the enemy had battered in vain!”

On the business of the treaty of Chunar, which succeeded the acceptance of this bribe, Mr. Sheridan was equally perspicuous and equally severe. It was a proceeding, he observed, which, as it had its beginning in corruption, had its continuance in fraud, and its end in violence. The first proposition of the Nabob, after his recent liberality, was, that the army should be removed, and all the English recalled from his dominions. The bribe which he had given was the obvious price of their removal. He felt the weight of their oppression—

he knew, to speak his own language, "that when the English stayed, they stayed to ask for something." Though their predecessors had exhausted the revenue—though they had shaken the tree until nothing remained upon its leafless branches, yet a new flight was on the wing to watch the first buddings of its prosperity, and to nip every promise of future luxuriance.

To this demand Mr. Hastings had promised to accede, and to recall every Englishman from the province; but by an evasion which Mr. Middleton disclosed with so much difficulty to their lordships on the last day of his appearance, the promise was virtually recalled. No orders were afterward given for the establishment of Englishmen in the province, but recommendations of the same effect with Mr. Middleton and the vizier were sent, and the practice continued. In the agreement respecting the resumption of the jaghires, the Nabob had been duped by a similar deception. He had demanded and obtained leave to resume those of certain individuals. Mr. Hastings, however, defeated the permission by making the order general; knowing that there were some favorites of the Nabob whom he could by no means be brought to dispossess. Such was the conduct of Mr. Hastings; not in the moment of cold or crafty policy, but in the hour of confidence and the effervescence of his gratitude for the favor he had just received. Soaring above every common feeling, he could deceive the man to whose liberality he stood indebted—even his gratitude was perilous; and a danger actually awaited on the return which he was to make to an effusion of generosity!

The transactions in which Sir Elijah Impey bore a share, and the tenor of his evidence, were the next objects of Mr.

Sheridan's animadversion. The late Chief-Justice of Bengal, he remarked, had repeatedly stated that Mr. Hastings had left Calcutta with two resources in his view—those of Benares and of Oude. It appeared, however, from every circumstance, that the latter resource was never in his contemplation, until the insurrection in Benares, terminating in the capture of Bedjegur, had destroyed all his hopes in that province. At that instant the mind of Mr. Hastings, fertile in resources, fixed itself on the treasures of the Begums, and Sir Elijah Impey was despatched to collect materials for their crimination. "But I have ever thought," said Mr. Sheridan, "the selection of such a personage, for such a purpose, one of the greatest aggravations of the guilt of Mr. Hastings." That he, the purity of whose character should have influenced his conduct, even in his most domestic retirements—that he, who, if consulting the dignity of British justice, should have remained as stationary as his court in Calcutta—that such a man should be called to travel 500 miles for the transactions of such a business, was a deviation without a plea, and a degradation without example. This, however, was in some degree a question to be abstracted for the consideration of those who adorned and illumined the seats of justice in Britain, and the purity of whose character precluded the necessity of any further observations on so different a conduct.

With respect to the manner in which Sir Elijah Impey had delivered his evidence, it required some observation, though made without imputing to that gentleman the smallest culpability. Sir Elijah had admitted that in giving his evidence he had never answered without looking equally to the probability and the consequences of the

fact in question. Sometimes he had even admitted circumstances of which he had no recollection beyond the mere probability that they had taken place. By consulting in this manner what was probable, and the contrary, he might certainly have corrected his memory at times, and Mr. Sheridan said he would accept that mode of giving his testimony, provided that the inverse of the proposition might also have place, and that where a circumstance was improbable, a similar degree of credit might be subtracted from the testimony of the witness. Five times in the House of Commons, and twice in that court, for instance, had Sir Elijah Impey borne testimony that a rebellion was raging at Fyzabad at the time of his journey to Lucknow. Yet, on the eighth examination, he had contradicted all the former, and declared that what he meant was, that the rebellion had been raging, and the country was then in some degree restored to quiet. The reasons assigned for the former errors were, that he had forgotten a letter received from Mr. Hastings, informing him that the rebellion was quelled, and that he had also forgotten his own proposition of travelling through Fyzabad to Lucknow. With respect to the letter nothing could be said, as it was not in evidence; but the other observation would scarcely be admitted, when it was recollected that in the House of Commons Sir Elijah Impey had declared that it was his proposal to travel through Fyzabad which had originally brought forth the information that the way was obstructed by the rebellion!—From this information Sir Elijah Impey had gone by the way of Illyabad; but what was yet more singular was that on his return he would again have returned by the way of Fyzabad, if he had not been again informed of the danger;

so that had it not been for these friendly informations, the chief-justice would have run plump into the very focus of the rebellion!—There were two circumstances, however, worthy of remark: the first was, that Sir Elijah Impey should, when charged with so dangerous a commission as that of procuring evidence to prove that the Begums had meditated the expulsion of their son from the throne, and of the English from Bengal, twice intend to pass through the city of their residence.

“This giddy chief-justice,” said Mr. Sheridan, “disregards business. He wants to see the country: like some innocent schoolboy, he takes the primrose path, and amuses himself as he goes: he thinks not that his errand is on danger and death; and that his party of pleasure ends in loading others with irons.” When at Lucknow, he never mentions the affidavits to the Nabob—no, he is too polite—he never talks of them to Mr. Hastings—out of politeness, too. A master of ceremonies in justice! When examined at the bar, he said—he imagines there must have been a sworn interpreter, from the looks of the manager. How I looked, heaven knows, said Mr. Sheridan, but such a physiognomist there is no escaping. He sees a sworn interpreter in my looks—he sees the manner of taking an oath in my looks!—he sees the Bason and the Ganges in my looks! As for himself, he only looks at the tops and bottoms of affidavits! In seven years he takes care never to look at these swearings; and then goes home one night, and undoes the whole; though, when he has seen them, Sir Elijah seems to know less about them than when he had not.

The second circumstance worthy of observation was, that if a conclusion could be formed from a cloud of cir-

cumstances, the inference of this occasion would undoubtedly be, that Sir Elijah Impey was dissuaded, by Mr. Hastings and Mr. Middleton, from passing by the way of Fyzabad, as well knowing that if, as a friend to Mr. Hastings, he were to approach the Begums, he would be convinced, by his reception, that nothing could be more foreign from the truth than the idea of their supposed disaffection. It was also observable that Sir Elijah Impey, at Lucknow, taking evidence in the face of day in support of this charge of rebellion against the Begums, when conversing with the Nabob and his minister, heard not a single word from either of a rebellion by which it was proposed to dethrone the Nabob, and to change the government of his dominions!—And equally unaccountable it appeared that Sir Elijah Impey, who had advised the taking of those affidavits for the safety of Mr. Hastings, had never read them at the time for the purpose of seeing whether they were sufficient for the purpose, or the contrary!—After so long a reserve, however, and after declaring on oath that he thought it unnecessary, the next step taken by Sir Elijah Impey was to read the affidavits, as, however late, they might contribute something to his information. He had been led to this study, by his own allegation, from having been misled by Mr. Sheridan, one of the managers on the part of the Commons, who, by looking at a book which he held in his hand, had persuaded him to declare that a sworn interpreter was present on the receiving of those affidavits—that Major Davy was present for that purpose—and that whoever it was, he was perfectly satisfied with his conduct on this occasion—when it was actually in evidence that no interpreter whatsoever was present. Now, said Mr. Sheridan, how I, by

merely looking into a book, could intimate the presence of an interpreter, could inculcate the assistance of Major Davy and could also look the satisfaction conceived by Sir Elijah Impey are questions which I believe that gentleman alone is able to determine!

He should admit, however, he said, that Sir Elijah Impey had not strictly attended to forms on the occasion of taking those affidavits; that he had merely directed the Bible to be given to the whites, and the Koran to the blacks, and had packed up in his wallet the returns of both without any further inquiry; or that he had glanced over them in India, having previously cut off all communication between his eye and his mind, so that no consciousness was transferred from the former to the latter; and that he had read them in England, if possible, with less information: however strange these circumstances might be, he would admit them all—he would even admit that the affidavits were legally and properly taken, and yet would prove that those affidavits were not sufficient to sustain any one point of criminality against those who were the subjects of the present charge.

After some brief observations on some parts of the affidavits, particularly on those of a native officer, who, as Mr. Sheridan observed, gave a specimen of platoon firing in his evidence by giving three affidavits in one day;¹ he concluded with observing, that as it would tend very much to abbreviate the discussion of the present charge, to enter more largely into the tendency of those

¹ "He had sworn once—then again—and made nothing of it: then comes he, with another, and swears a third time—and in company does better. Single-handed he can do nothing—but succeeds by platoon swearing and volleys of oaths!"

affidavits, he should therefore make a pause for the present, and take the liberty of calling the attention of their lordships more particularly to this point on the ensuing day.

FRIDAY, JUNE 6

MR. SHERIDAN resumed his speech, by expressing his satisfaction that, in the interval of the adjournment, the remaining part of the evidence, etc., had been printed and laid before their lordships—as it was the wish of the managers that every document should be before the court at the time, for the purpose of determining with more accuracy whether they had or had not borne out the charges which they presented.

Recurring then to the affidavits taken by Sir Elijah Impey at Lucknow, they formed, he observed, a material article in the defence of Mr. Hastings; and on the decision of their lordships respecting the weight of the allegations which they contained, a great part of this question would finally depend. With respect to one part of the charge made on the Begums—their having shown a uniform spirit of hostility to the British government—it had not only failed, but it was absolutely abandoned by the counsel for the prisoner, as not being supported by a tittle of evidence. In deciding on the other parts of this charge, their having committed an overt act of rebellion, their having inflamed the jaghiredars, and excited the discontents in Oude, their lordships were to consider the situation in which Mr. Hastings stood at the time these charges were made. Having failed in his attempt at Benares, his mind was entirely directed to the treasures of the Begums. He

knew that such was the situation into which he had plunged the affairs of the Company, that he could not address his venal masters, unless some treasure was found. He had, therefore, stood forward as an accuser, where he was also to preside as a judge—and with much caution should that judge be heard who has apparently a profit on the conviction and an interest in the condemnation of the party to be tried. He would not from this infer, however, that the charge was groundless; but he would argue that until fully proved, it should not meet with implicit credit. It was obvious also that the attempt said to have been made by the Begums to dethrone the Nabob and extirpate the English was in the highest degree improbable; but he would not infer from thence that it was impossible; there is in human nature a perverse propensity to evil, which had sometimes caused the perpetration of bad acts without any obvious gratification resulting to the perpetrator. All he should claim, therefore, was, that the accusations brought by Mr. Hastings against the Begums should undergo a candid examination, and that probable evidence, at least, should be brought to the support of charges in themselves improbable.

Mr. Hastings, in his defence, had complained that his prosecutor had attempted to blacken these affidavits as rash, irregular, and irrelevant; when they had been authenticated by the presence of Sir Elijah Impey, and as he also observed, being taken in an inquiry directed solely to establish the guilt of Cheit Sing, they were merely an accessary evidence in the present case, and were therefore less liable to suspicion. The reasoning, in this last instance, Mr. Sheridan observed, would undoubtedly be good—but the assertion, that the inquiries were exclu-

sively directed to the crimination of Cheit Sing, had been proved an absolute falsehood, as they were really intended to justify what was afterward to be done. With respect to the epithets bestowed on those affidavits by his honorable friend, the truth would best appear from a review of their contents. Mr. Sheridan then proceeded to remark on the affidavits severally, as far as they related to charges against the Begums. Those of the Jemmadars, or native subaltern officers, contained nothing, it appeared, but vague rumor and improbable surmise.

One deponent, who was a black officer in one of our regiments of sepoy, stated, that having a considerable number of people as hostages in a fort where he commanded, and who had been sent thither by Colonel Hannay, the country people got round the fort, and demanded that they should be delivered up—but instead of complying with their request, he put almost twenty of them to death: he afterward threw down some of the battlements of the fort, and killed four more of the hostages; and, on another day, the heads of eighteen more were struck off, and among them the head of a great rajah of the country, by order of Colonel Hannay. The people around were enraged at this execution, and crowded about the fort; some of them were heard to say that the Begums had offered a reward of 1,000 rupees for the head of every European; 100 for the head of every sepoy officer; and 10 for the head of a common sepoy. But it appeared afterward, pretty clearly, that no such rewards had, in reality, been offered; for when Captain Gordon's detachment took the field, the people who surrounded him told him that if he would deliver up his arms and his baggage they would let him and his men continue their route un-

molested; so little were they disposed to enrich themselves by the slaughter of the British forces that when Captain Gordon's detachment was reduced, by desertion, to ten men, and when the slaughter or capture of them would have been of course a work of very little difficulty, the country people remained satisfied with the dispersion of the detachment, and then returned to their homes, without attempting to attack the poor remains of that detachment—the ten men who continued with Captain Gordon. That gentleman, in his affidavit, supposed the Begums to have encouraged the country people to rise, because when he arrived at the bank of the river Saunda Nutta, on the opposite bank of which stands the town of Saunda, the fowzdar, or governor, who commanded there for the Bow Begum, in whose jaghire the town lay, did not instantly send boats to carry him and his men over the river; and because the fowzdar pointed two or three guns across the river. Now, admitting both these facts to be true, they could not affect the Begums; for it was the duty of the fowzdar to be on his guard, and not to let troops into his fort until he knew for what purpose they appeared before it. In the next place, there was nothing in the affidavit which indicated that the guns were pointed against Captain Gordon and his men; on the contrary, it was possible that these guns had made that gentleman's pursuers disperse; for it was rather remarkable that they should pursue him while he was in force, and should give over the pursuit when, by the desertion of his soldiers, his detachment was reduced to ten men. However, whatever might have been the cause of their dispersion, Captain Gordon at length got across the river, and found himself in a place of safety as soon as he got into a town that was under the authority

of the Begums, who caused him to be sent afterward, under a protecting guard, to Colonel Hannay. This circumstance was suppressed in the affidavit made afterward by Captain Gordon; for what purpose it was not for him to judge.

Hyder Beg Khan, the minister of the Nabob, though swearing both to rumor and to fact, could mention no particulars of an insurrection which was to have dethroned his sovereign. Nor was the evidence of Colonel Hannay and the other English officers more conclusive: loud suspicions appeared to have been propagated at a time of general disturbance, and when the flames of war were raging in the neighboring province of Benares. Mr. Middleton, though swearing after he had received his final orders from Mr. Hastings respecting the seizure of the treasures, could only say, that he believed the Begums had given countenance to the rebels, and, he had heard, some aid. The whole of the depositions, Mr. Sheridan observed, were so futile, that were they defended in an inferior court of justice, he was convinced he should be forbidden to reply, and told that he was combating with that which was nothing!

With respect to the first part of the charge, the rebellion of the Begums, he could find no trace of any such transaction.

"The best antiquarian in our society," said Mr. Sheridan, "would be, after all, never the wiser!—Let him look where he would, where can he find any vestige of battle, or a single blow? In this rebellion, there is no soldier, neither horse nor foot: not a man is known fighting: no office-order survives, not an express is to be seen. This great rebellion, as notorious as our 'Forty-five, passed away

—unnatural, but not raging—beginning in nothing—and ending, no doubt, just as it began!

“If rebellion, my lords, can thus engender unseen, it is time for us to look about. What hitherto has been dramatic may become historical—Knightsbridge may at this moment be invested; and all that is left us, nothing but the forlorn hope of being dealt with, according to the statute, by the sound of the Riot Act, and the sight, if it can be, of another Elijah!”

The counsel had thought proper to dwell for a time on the Nabob's going to Fyzabad, on his return from Chunar, attended by a guard of 2,000 men. Mr. Middleton being asked, whether these men were well appointed, though on another occasion he had declared himself no military man, caught in the instant a gleam of martial memory, and answered in the affirmative. The contrary, however, was proved by the evidence of Captain Edwards, who attended the Nabob as his aide-de-camp, and also that those troops were actually mutinous for their pay, who were then taken to stop the progress of disaffection! Yet he would agree to all that the counsel required—he would suffer the whole 2,000 men to enter full trot into the city of Fyzabad, “while Middleton stood by out of his wits, with a gleam of martial memory; and while Sir Elijah, like a man going to learn fashions, or freedom in England, takes a sportive tour, as smooth and well-beaten as Old Brentford”; for Captain Edwards had fully proved that it was merely the usual guard of the Nabob. It would therefore have been disrespectful to have gone with less attendance; he could have no motive for going incognito unless he might have intended to make himself a perfect match for the insurrection, which was also incognito, or thought that a rebellion

without an army would be most properly subdued by a prince without a guard.

Another supposed proof of the disaffection of the Begums was brought, by alleging, that 1,000 Nudjies had been raised at Fyzabad, and sent to the assistance of Cheit Sing; and this for no other reason than a detachment of the same number being in the list of the forces of the Rajah! This single circumstance was taken as full and complete evidence of the identity of those troops. It was no matter that the officer second in command with Cheit Sing had sworn that the detachment came from Lucknow, and not from Fyzabad—this Mr. Hastings would have to be a trifling mistake of one capital for another! The same officer, however, had also deposed that the troops were of a different description; those of the Begum being swordsmen, and those in the service of the Rajah, matchlockmen. The inference to be made, therefore, undoubtedly was, that the detachment did actually come from Lucknow; not sent, perhaps, by the Nabob, but by some of the jaghiredars, his favorites, who had abundant power for that purpose, and whose aversion to the English had always been avowed. The name of Sadib Ally, his half-brother, had been mentioned as being highly criminal in these transactions;—but to the question, why was he not punished? Sir Elijah Impey had given the best answer at the bar, by informing their lordships that Sadib Ally was miserably poor! He had, therefore, found protection in his poverty, and safety in his insolvency. Every common maxim of judging on such occasions was certain to be overturned by Mr. Hastings. It was generally supposed that the needy were the most daring; and that necessity was the strongest stimulus to innovation; but

the Governor-General, inverting this proposition, had laid it down as an axiom that the actions of the poor were sufficiently punished by contempt; that the guilt of an offender should increase in a precise ratio with his wealth; and that, in fine, where there was no treasure, there could undoubtedly be no treason!

Mr. Sheridan next read the letter of the Begum to Mr. Hastings, complaining of the suspicions which had been so unjustly raised of her conduct; and referring to Captain Gordon, who could testify her innocence. He also read the letter of Captain Gordon to the Begum, thanking her for her interference, and acknowledging that he owed his life to her bounty. It had been asked, with an air of triumph, why Captain Gordon was not called to that bar? He had answered then as now, that he would not call on a man who, in his affidavit, had suppressed all mention of this important transaction. He trusted, that if ever he saw him at that bar, he should witness a contrite zeal to do away the effects of that silence, and behold a penitential tear for the part he had then taken. He hoped, however, for the honor of human nature, that Captain Gordon was then under a delusion; and that he was led on by Mr. Middleton, who was well informed of the business, to act a part of which he did not know the consequences. Every feeling of humanity recoiled from the transaction taken in any other point of view. It was difficult to imagine that any man could say to a benefactor, "The breath that I now draw, next to heaven, I owe to you; my existence is an emanation from your bounty; I am indebted to you beyond all possibility of return, and, therefore, my gratitude shall be your destruction."

The original letters on this occasion from Colonel Hannay and Captain Gordon to the Begum, had been transmitted by her, through Major Gilpin, to Mr. Middleton, for the purpose of being shown to Mr. Hastings; but the leaves were torn from Mr. Middleton's letter-book in the place where they should have appeared. When examined on this subject, he said that he had deposited Persian copies of those letters in the office at Lucknow, but that he did not bring translations with him to Calcutta, because he left Lucknow the very day after he had received the originals. This excuse, Mr. Sheridan said, he could boldly assert was a flat and decided perjury!¹ It could be proved by corresponding debates that Middleton had received those letters at least a month before he left Lucknow. He departed from that city on the 17th of October; but must have received those letters before the 20th of the preceding month. He was, therefore, well aware of the purity of those in whose oppression he was engaged; he knew that their attachment was fully proved at the very time they were charged with disaffection; but as their punishment was predetermined, he, in concert with his principal, found it necessary to suppress the testimonials of their innocence. This mass of fraud and cruelty, covered as it had been by every art which the vile agents could devise, was now bared to the view by the aid of

¹ In this evidence, Mr. Sheridan said in express terms, "there appeared flat perjury!—enormity, if it was so, beyond all expectation, made manifest by that power, to whose nod all creatures must bend—to whom nothing, in the whole system of thought or action, is impossible; who can invigorate the arm of infancy with a giant's nerve—who can bring light out of darkness, and good out of evil—can rive the confines of hidden mischief, and drag forth each minister of guilt from amid his deeds of darkness and disaster; reluctant, alas! and unrepenting; to exemplify, at least, if not atone; and to qualify any casual sufferings of innocence by the final doom of its oppressor: to prove there are the never-failing corrections of God, to make straight the obliquity of man."

that Power who can give a giant's nerve even to an infant arm. The injured sufferers, with tears more powerful than argument, and with sighs more impressive than eloquence, supplicated their lordships' justice, and called for that retribution which should alight on the detested but unrepenting author of their wrongs.

The benevolent interference of the Begum in favor of Captain Gordon had been assigned by Mr. Hastings in his defence, to her intelligence of the successes of the English at that period. That this allegation was founded in manifest falsehood could very easily be proved. The only success which the British forces at that time met with, was that of Colonel Blair, on the 3d of September, but where he himself acknowledged that another victory gained at such a loss would be equal to a defeat. The reports spread around the country at the time were of the most unfavorable cast—that Mr. Hastings had been slain at Benares, and that the English were everywhere routed. These reports, it was to be remarked, were of infinitely more consequence to the present argument than the facts which really occurred; but if any doubt remained on the mind of any man, it was only necessary to recur to a never-failing evidence, in that of Mr. Hastings against himself. In a letter to the council, which was on record, Mr. Hastings acknowledged, that from the 22d of August to the 22d of September, which included, of course, the time of Captain Gordon's liberation, he had been confined in a situation of the utmost hazard—that his safety, during that time, was extremely precarious; and that the affairs of the English were generally thought to be unfavorable in the extreme! In his defence, however, these admissions were totally forgotten. There was also an ob-

servable inconsistency in what was there alleged—that Colonel Hannay had written to the Begum in the style of supplication—because, in the desperate situation of affairs, he knew of no other which he could adopt; and yet, in the same sentence, it was averred that the Begum had procured the release of Captain Gordon—from her knowledge of the prosperous advances of our army! It appeared, therefore, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that those princesses had demonstrated the firmness of their attachment to the English, not in the moment of success—not from the impulse of fear, nor from the prospect of future protection; but at a time when the hoard of collected vengeance was about to burst over our heads; when the measure of European guilt in India appeared to be completely filled by the oppressions which had just then been exercised on the unfortunate Cheit Sing; and when offended heaven seemed to interfere, to change the meek disposition of the natives—to awaken their resentment—and to inspirit their revenge.

The second of the remaining parts of the charge against the Begums, was their having inflamed the jaghiredars. It was evident, however, even from the letters of Mr. Middleton himself, that no such aid was wanted to awaken resentments which must, unavoidably, have arisen from the nature of the business. There were many powerful interests concerned; the jaghires which were depending, were of a vast amount; and as their owners by the resumption would be reduced at once to poverty and distress, their own feelings were sufficient to produce every effect which had been described. It was idle, therefore, to ascribe to the Begums, without a shadow of proof, the inspiring of sentiments which must have

existed without their interference. "I shall not waste the time of the court," said Mr. Sheridan, "on such a subject, but appeal to your lordships, individually, to determine whether, on a proposal being made to confiscate your several estates—and the magnitude of the objects are not very unequal—the interference of any two ladies in this kingdom would be at all necessary to awaken your resentments, and to rouse you to opposition," etc.

The discontents which prevailed in the province of Oude had been also, and with similar justice, attributed to these princesses, and formed the third and last article of charge against them. But the conduct of the officers residing in that province; the repeated complaints from the natives; and the acknowledged rapacity of Colonel Hannay, left no difficulty in tracing those discontents to the source whence they had originated. The Nabob himself was so well convinced of the tyranny of Colonel Hannay, that on a proposition coming from Mr. Hastings to send him back into the province, the Nabob swore by Mahomet, "That if the colonel was sent back, he would quit the province and come to reside with Mr. Hastings." The Governor-General, some time after, sent an apology for the suggestion; but it was then too late—Colonel Hannay was dead—and the province was desolate!

"Should a stranger survey the land formerly Sujab Dowlah's, and seek the cause of its calamity—should he ask, what monstrous madness had ravaged thus, with widespread war—what desolating foreign foe—what disputed succession—what religious zeal—what fabled monster has stalked abroad, and with malice and mortal enmity to man, has withered with the gripe of death every

growth of nature and humanity—all the means of delight, and each original, simple principle of bare existence? The answer will be, if any answer dare be given—'No, alas! not one of these things!—no desolating foreign foe!—no disputed succession! no religious super-serviceable zeal! This damp of death is the mere effusion of British amity; we sink under the pressure of their support—we writhe under the gripe of their pestiferous alliance!'

"Thus they suffered, in barren anguish and ineffectual bewailings. And, 'O audacious fallacy!' says the defence of Mr. Hastings, 'What cause was there for any incidental ills, but their own resistance?'"

The cause was nature in the first-born principles of man. It grew with his growth! it strengthened with his strength! It taught him to understand; it enabled him to feel: for where there is human fate, can there be a penury of human feeling? Where there is injury, will there not be resentment? Is not despair to be followed by courage? The God of battles pervades and penetrates the inmost spirit of man, and rousing him to shake off the burden that is grievous, and the yoke that is galling, will reveal the law written in his heart, and the duties and privileges of his nature—the grand, universal compact of man with man! That power is delegated in trust, for the good of all who obey it—that the rights of men must arm against man's oppression, for that indifference were treason to human state; and patience, nothing less than blasphemy against the laws which govern the world.

That this representation was not exaggerated, would appear from the description of Major Naylor, who had succeeded Colonel Hannay, and who had previously saved him from the vengeance which the assembled ryots, or hus-

bandmen, were about to take on their oppressors. The progress of extortion, it appeared, had not been uniform in that province; it had absolutely increased as its resources failed; and as the labor of exaction became more difficult, the price of that increased labor had been charged as an additional tax on the wretched inhabitants! At length, even in their meek bosoms, where injury never before begot resentment, nor despair aroused to courage, increased oppression had its due effect. They assembled round their oppressor, and had nearly made him their sacrifice. So deeply were they impressed with the sense of their wrongs, that they would not even accept of life from those who had rescued Colonel Hannay. They presented themselves to the swords of the soldiery; and as they lay bleeding on the banks of their sacred stream, they comforted themselves with the ghastly hope that their blood would not descend into the soil, but that it would ascend to the view of the God of nature, and there claim a retribution for their wrongs!—Of a people thus injured, and thus feeling, it was an audacious fallacy to attribute the conduct to any external impulse.—That God who gave them the form of man implanted also the wish to vindicate the rights of man. Though simple in their manners, they were not so uninformed as not to know that power is in every state a trust reposed for the general good; and that the trust being once abused, it should of course be instantly resented.

The innocence of the Begums, Mr. Sheridan continued, being thus most indubitably and incontrovertibly proved, it could not be allowed that he argued fairly, if he did not immediately infer, from that proof, the guilt of Mr. Hastings. He would go so far as to admit that Mr. Hastings might have been deluded by his accomplices, and have

been persuaded into a conviction of a criminality which did not exist. If that were proved, he would readily agree to acquit the prisoner of the present charge. But if, on the contrary, there appeared in his subsequent conduct such a concealment as denoted the fullest consciousness of guilt; if all his narrations of the business were marked with inconsistency and contradiction; that mind must be inaccessible to conviction which could entertain a doubt of his criminality. From the month of September, in which the seizure of the treasures took place, until the January following, had Mr. Hastings wholly concealed the transaction from the council at Calcutta! If anything could be more singular than this concealment, it was the reasons by which it was afterward attempted to be justified.

Mr. Hastings first pleaded a want of leisure. He was writing to the council at a time when he complained of an absolute inaction—he found time to narrate some pretty Eastern tales, respecting the attachment of the sepoy to their cannon, and their dressing them with flowers on particular occasions; but of a rebellion which convulsed an empire—of the seizure of the treasures to such an amount—he could not find leisure to say one syllable, until he had secured an excuse for his conduct in the possession of the money. The second excuse was that all communication was cut off with Fyzabad; and this was alleged at the time when letters were passing daily between him and Mr. Middleton; and when Sir Elijah Impey had pronounced the road to be as free from interruption as that between London and Brentford. The third excuse was that Mr. Middleton had taken with him, on his departure from Chunar, all the original papers

which it was necessary for Mr. Hastings to consult. That the original papers had not been removed was evident, however, from Mr. Hastings sending a copy of the treaty of Chunar to Mr. Middleton, on the fourth day after the resident's departure; though it appeared that it was re-enclosed at a proper time to Mr. Hastings, to be shown to the council. A copy of the same had been shown to the Oriental Grotius, Sir Elijah Impey, which he confessed his having read at the time when he declared his ignorance of the guarantee to the princesses of Oude! Looking to the absurdity of reasons such as these, assigned in defence of a silence so criminal, Mr. Sheridan declared that he would lay aside every other argument, that he would not dwell on any other topic of guilt, if the counsel for Mr. Hastings would but join issue on this point, and prove, to the satisfaction of the court, that any of these excuses were, in the smallest degree, sufficient for the purpose for which they were assigned.

Amid the other artifices of concealment was a letter from Colonel Hannay, dated October 17, 1781, which Mr. Sheridan indisputably proved could not have been written at the time; but was fabricated at a subsequent period; as it contained a mention of facts which could by no possibility have been known to Colonel Hannay at the time when it was pretended to have been written. Whatever else could be done for the purpose of concealment, was done in that mixture of canting and mystery, of rhapsody and enigma—Mr. Hastings' narrative of his journey to Benares. He there set out with a solemn appeal to heaven for the truth of his averments, and a declaration of the same purport to Mr. Wheeler—the faith, however, thus pledged, was broken both to God and man; for it was al-

ready in evidence that no single transaction had occurred as it was there stated!

The question would naturally occur to every person who had attended to these proceedings—"Why Mr. Hastings had used all these efforts to veil the whole of this business in mystery?" It was not strictly incumbent on him to answer the question, yet he would reply, that Mr. Hastings had obviously a bloody reason for the concealment. He had looked to the natural effect of strong injuries on the human mind: as, in the case of Cheit Sing, he thought that oppression must beget resistance; and the efforts which might be made by the Begums in their own defence, though really the effect, he was determined to represent as the cause of his proceedings. Even when disappointed in those aims by the natural meekness and submission of those with whom he was to act, he could not abandon the idea; and accordingly in his letter to the directors, of January 5, 1782, had represented the subsequent disturbances in Oude as the positive cause of the violent measures which he had adopted—two months before those disturbances had existence! He there congratulates his masters on the seizure of those treasures which, by the law of Mahomet, he assures them were the property of Asoph ul Dowlah. Thus the perturbed spirit of the Mohammedan law, according to Mr. Hastings' idea, still hovered round those treasures, and envied them to every possessor, until it at length saw them safely lodged within the sanctuary of the British treasury! In the same spirit of piety, Mr. Hastings had assured the House of Commons that the inhabitants of Asia believed that some unseen power interfered, and conducted all his pursuits to their destined end. That Providence, however, which

thus conducted the efforts of Mr. Hastings, was not the Providence to which others profess themselves indebted—which interferes in the cause of virtue, and insensibly leads guilt toward its punishment; it was not, in fine, that Providence

“Whose works are goodness, and whose ways are right.”

The unseen power which protected Mr. Hastings, operated by leading others into criminality, which, as far as it respected the Governor-General, was highly fortunate in its effects. If the Rajah Nundcomar brings a charge against Mr. Hastings, Providence so orders it that the Rajah has committed a forgery some years before; which, with some friendly assistance, proves a sufficient reason to remove out of the way so troublesome an acquaintance. If the Company's affairs are deranged through the want of money, Providence ordains it so that the Begums, though unconsciously, fall into a rebellion, and give Mr. Hastings an opportunity of seizing on their treasures! Thus the successes of Mr. Hastings depended not on any positive merit in himself; it was to the inspired felonies, the heaven-born crimes, and the providential treasons of others that he was indebted for each success, and for the whole tenor of his prosperity!

It must undoubtedly bear a strange appearance, that a man of reputed ability should, even when acting wrongly, have had recourse to so many bungling artifices, and spread so thin a veil over his deceptions. But those who testified any surprise at this circumstance, must have attended but little to the demeanor of Mr. Hastings. Through the whole course of his conduct he seemed to have adhered to one general rule—to keep as clear as possible of the

fact which he was to relate! Observing this maxim, his only study was to lay a foundation as fanciful and as ornamental as possible—then by a superadded mass of fallacies, the superstructure was soon complete, though by some radical defect it never failed to tumble on his own head—rising from those ruins, however, he was soon found rearing a similar edifice, but with a like effect. Delighting in difficulties, he disdained the plain and secure foundation of truth; he loved, on the contrary, to build on a precipice, and encamp on a mine. Inured to falls, he felt not the danger; and frequent defeats had given him a hardihood, without impressing a sense of the disgrace.

It had been a maxim once as much admitted in the practice of common life as in the school of philosophy, that where heaven was inclined to destroy the vice, it began by debasing the intellect. This idea was carried still further by the right honorable gentleman (Mr. Burke) who opened the prosecution; who declared that prudence and vice were things absolutely incompatible—that the vicious man being deprived of his best energies, and curtailed in his proportion of understanding, was left with such a shortsighted degree of penetration as could not come under the denomination of prudence. This sentiment did honor to the name of his right honorable friend; “to whom,” said Mr. Sheridan, “I look up with homage!—whose genius is commensurate with his philanthropy—whose memory will stretch itself beyond the fleeting objects of any little partial shuffling, through the whole wide range of human knowledge, and honorable aspiration after human good; as large as the system which forms life—as lasting as those objects that adorn.”

But it was still to be remembered that there were other characters besides a Cæsar and a Cromwell; who, acting on determinations inimical to virtue, and hostile to the laws of society, had proceeded, if not with prudence, yet with an all-commanding sagacity that was productive of similar effects. Those, however, were isolated characters, which left the vice that dared to follow either in a state of despondent vassalage, or involved it in destruction. Such was the present instance of failure; and such it was always to be trusted would be that of every other who regarded such characters with an eye of emulation. Such was the perpetual law of nature, that virtue, whether placed in a circle more contracted or enlarged, moved with sweet consent in its allotted orbit; there was no dissonance to jar, no asperity to divide; and that harmony, which made its felicity, at the same time constituted its protection. Of vice, on the contrary, the parts were disunited, and each in barbarous language clamored for its pre-eminence. It was a scene where, though one domineering passion might have sway, the others still pressed forward with their dissonant claims, and in the moral world, effects still awaiting on their causes, the discord of course insured the defeat.

Mr. Sheridan reverted again to the subject of the claims made on the princesses of Oude. Whether those were first made by the Nabob, or suggested to him by his sovereign, Mr. Hastings, though the counsel had labored much to prove the former, appeared to him to carry very little difference. If the seizure was made as a confiscation and punishment for supposed guilt—then, if ever there was a crime which ought to pass “unwhipped of justice,” it was that where a son must necessarily be made the instrument

of an infliction, by which he broke his covenant of existence, and violated the condition by which he held his rank in society. If, on the contrary, it was meant as a resumption, in consequence of a supposed right in the Nabob, then Mr. Hastings should have recollected the guarantee of the Company granted to the Begums; unless it was meant to be said that Mr. Hastings acted in that as in other instances; and assured them of his protection, until the very moment when it was wanted. It was idle, however, to dwell on the conduct or free agency of a man who, it was notorious, had no will of his own. What Mr. Middleton asserted at that bar would scarcely be put in competition with a series of established facts; by which it appeared that the Nabob had submitted to every indignity, and yielded to every assumption. It was an acknowledged fact, that he had even been brought to join in that paltry artifice which had been termed the subornation of letters. This practice was carried to such a length that he in the end complained, in a manner rather ludicrous, that he was really tired of sending different characters of Mr. Bristow, in pursuance of the directions sent to the resident. He had pronounced black white and white black so often that he really knew not what to say; and therefore begged that, once for all, the friends of Mr. Hastings might be considered as his, and that their enemies might also be the same. After this it was superfluous to argue that the Nabob could direct his views to so important an object as the seizing of the treasures, unless he had been impelled by Mr. Middleton, and authorized by Mr. Hastings!

TUESDAY, JUNE 20

MR. SHERIDAN said, that relying upon the attention with which he was honored the last time he had the honor of addressing their lordships, he would not recapitulate on this occasion what he had said on Friday, to show that the Nabob of Oude had been reduced by Mr. Hastings to the degraded state of a dependent prince who had no will of his own, but was obliged to pursue any measure which Mr. Hastings was pleased to dictate to him. The counsel for the prisoner had labored to impress their lordships with an idea that the Nabob was a prince, sovereignly independent, and in no degree subject to the control of Mr. Hastings; but after the numberless proofs that had been given of his being a cipher in the hands of the Governor-General, it would be incumbent on the counsel to prove his independence by very strong evidence indeed; and he believed that in the affair of the resumption of the jaghires, and the seizure of the treasures in particular, they would find it a very difficult matter to execute such a task. The honorable managers had asserted that the measure of seizing the treasures had originated with Mr. Hastings; and they had given in evidence many strong proofs in support of the assertion; it would be incumbent therefore on the counsel to prove that the measure had originated with the Nabob; and of that they could not give a more satisfactory proof than the paper or instrument in which it was originally proposed by him to Mr. Hastings. But as he believed no such proposition ever came from the Nabob as an original

measure, so he took it for granted the counsel could never produce any letter or paper from that prince, containing any such proposition, as coming immediately from himself.

The seizure of the treasures and the jaghires was the effect of a dark conspiracy, in which no more than six persons were concerned. Three of the conspirators were of a high order—these were Mr. Hastings, who might be considered as the principal leader in this black affair; Mr. Middleton, the English resident at Lucknow, and Sir Elijah Impey—the three inferior or subordinate conspirators were Hyder Beg Khan, the nominal minister of the Nabob, but in reality the creature of Mr. Hastings; Colonel Hannay, and Ali Ibrahim Khan.

Sir Elijah Impey was intrusted by Mr. Hastings to convey his orders to Mr. Middleton, and to concert with him the means of carrying them into execution. As this gentleman was a principal actor in this iniquitous affair, Mr. Sheridan thought it would be necessary to take notice of some parts of the evidence which he had delivered upon oath at their lordships' bar.

When Sir Elijah was asked what became of the Persian affidavits (sworn before him) after he had delivered them to Mr. Hastings, he replied that he really did not know. He was asked if he had got them translated, or knew of their having been translated, or had any conversation with Mr. Hastings on the subject of the affidavits? He replied that he knew nothing at all of their having been translated, and that he had no conversation whatever with Mr. Hastings on the subject of the affidavits after he had delivered them to him. He was next asked whether he did not think it a little singular that he should not have held any conversation with the Governor-General on a subject

of so much moment as was that of the affidavits he had taken? His answer was that he did not think it singular; and his reason for thinking to the contrary was, that he left Chunar the very day after he delivered the affidavits to Mr. Hastings. From this answer their lordships might infer that Sir Elijah, on quitting Chunar, had left the Governor-General behind him: but Mr. Sheridan said he would prove that this was by no means the case; for, from letters written by Sir Elijah himself, and which had been read in evidence, it appeared that he arrived at Chunar the 1st of December, 1781; that he then began to take affidavits; that having completed that business, he and Mr. Hastings left Chunar together, and set out on the road to Benares; and that, having been together from the 1st to the 6th of December, the former took leave of the latter, and proceeded on his way to Calcutta. Here Mr. Sheridan left their lordships to judge how far Sir Elijah Impey had or had not attempted to impose upon them, when he said that his reason for not thinking it singular that he should not have had any conversation with Mr. Hastings on the subject of the affidavits, after he had delivered them to that gentleman, was, that he left Chunar the very next day. The inference was, that therefore he could not have conversed with him—but now their lordships must see that such an inference would be false; as Sir Elijah Impey left Chunar in company with the Governor-General; and continued with him till the 6th of December. If then the answer made by Sir Elijah was so worded as to lead to a false inference, it would be for their lordships to judge whether the whole of his evidence on that point was or was not calculated to mislead and deceive them.

There was another part of the same gentleman's evidence which he would prove was not entitled to any credit from their lordships. Sir Elijah had sworn that he knew nothing of the Persian affidavits having been translated. Now it so happened that a letter from Major William Davy, the confidential secretary of Mr. Hastings and Persian translator, had been read to their lordships in evidence; from which it appeared that he had made an affidavit before Sir Elijah Impey himself, at Buxar, on the 12th of December, just six days after that gentleman and Mr. Hastings parted, the purport of which was, that the papers annexed to the affidavit were faithful translations of the Persian affidavits (also annexed) taken by Sir Elijah; the date (the 12th of December) appeared no fewer than six times in Major Davy's deposition, so that there could not be any mistake in it; it was sworn before Sir Elijah, and was signed by him; and yet that gentleman had sworn before their lordships that he had never heard of any translation of those Persian affidavits. Upon these two circumstances, Mr. Sheridan said, he would make only one remark, which had been used by a very great man, "That no one could tell where to look for truth if it could not be found on the judgment-seat, or know what to credit if the affirmation of a judge was not to be trusted."

Sir Elijah Impey, as he had observed before, was intrusted by Mr. Hastings to concert with Mr. Middleton the means of carrying into execution the orders of which Sir Elijah was the bearer from the Governor-General to the resident. These orders did not appear anywhere in writing; but their lordships had been made acquainted with the purport of them by the most satisfactory evidence:

they therefore knew that Mr. Middleton was, in obedience to them, to persuade the Nabob to propose, as from himself to Mr. Hastings, the seizure of the Begum's treasures. That this was the real fact would appear unquestionable, from the general tenor of Mr. Middleton's letters on the subject, and from Mr. Hastings' own account of the business in his defence. The latter appeared to be extremely at a loss how to act about the treasures. The (supposed) rebellion of the Begums made it extraordinary, that at the moment when he was confiscating their estates, he should stipulate that an annual allowance, equal to the produce of those estates, should be secured to them. He found himself embarrassed how to proceed also respecting the treasures; for, on the one hand, he did not wish to appear the principal mover in seizing them, and yet he did not hesitate to charge them with treason and rebellion, for which he might have seized them as forfeited to the state. In the latter case it looked as if he feared to do what the treason of the Begums would have justified him in doing. His embarrassment on this occasion proved that he was conscious of the injustice of his proceedings against those ladies. If they were notoriously in rebellion, there could not be any ground for his being ashamed of appearing in the measure of seizing their property: it was only the consciousness of their innocence that could make him afraid of undertaking what would bring upon him the execration of all ranks of people. In this perplexity he desired Sir Elijah Impey would instruct Mr. Middleton to urge the Nabob to propose, as from himself, the seizure of the treasures. The unhappy prince, without a will of his own, consented to make the proposal, as an alternative for the resumption of the jaghires—a measure to which he had

the most unconquerable reluctance. Mr. Hastings, as it were to indulge the Nabob, agreed to the proposal, rejoicing at the same time that his scheme had proved so far successful as that this proposition, coming from the Nabob, would, as he thought, free him (Mr. Hastings) from the odium of plundering the princesses. But the artifice was too shallow, and their lordships were now able to trace the measure to its source. They were now apprised, from the evidence, that Mr. Hastings had suggested it to Sir Elijah Impey, that he might suggest it to Mr. Middleton, that he might suggest it to the Nabob, that his highness might suggest it to Mr. Hastings; and thus suggestion returned to the place from which it originally set out. One single passage from a letter written by Mr. Middleton to Mr. Hastings, on the 2d of December, 1781, would make this point appear as clear as day. In this passage Mr. Middleton informed the Governor-General, "That the Nabob, wishing to evade the measure of resuming the jaghires, had sent him a message to the following purport—that if the measure proposed was intended to procure the payment of the balance due to the Company, he could better and more expeditiously effect that object, by taking from his mother the treasures of his father, which he asserted to be in her hands; and to which he claimed a right founded in the laws of the Koran; and that it would be sufficient that he (Mr. Hastings) would hint his opinion upon it, without giving a formal sanction to the measure proposed. Mr. Middleton added, the resumption of the jaghires it is necessary to suspend, till I have your answer to this letter."

Upon this letter, Mr. Sheridan said, he had some ob-

servations to submit. In the first place, it was clear that though the Nabob had consented to make the desired proposal for seizing the treasures, it was only an alternative; for it entered into the Nabob's head both to seize the treasures and resume the jaghires; the former measure he wished to substitute in the room of the latter, and by no means to couple them together; but Mr. Hastings was too nice a reasoner for the prince—for he insisted that one measure should be carried into execution because the Nabob had proposed it, and the other because he himself determined upon it; and thus each party found his alternative adopted.

Another remark upon this letter was that here the Nabob was still taught to plead his right to the treasures, as founded upon the laws of the Koran; but not a word was said about the guarantee and treaty that had barred or extinguished that right, whatever it might have been. But if all that Mr. Hastings would have the world believe was true, he had a much better claim, against which the treaty and guarantee could not be pleaded—and that was the treason of the Begums, by which they had forfeited all their property to the state, and every claim upon the English protection. But upon this right by forfeiture the Nabob was silent—he was a stranger to rebellion, and to the treason of his parents, and therefore was reduced to the necessity of reviving a claim under the laws of the Koran, which the treaty and guarantee had forever barred.

The last observation with which he would trouble their lordships was upon the very remarkable expression contained in this letter—"That it would be sufficient to hint his (Mr. Hastings') opinion upon it, without giving a for-

mal sanction to the measure proposed." Why this caution? If the Begums had been guilty of treason, why should he be fearful of declaring to the world, that it was not the practice of the English to protect rebellious subjects and prevent their injured sovereigns from proceeding against them according to law? That therefore he considered the treaty and guarantee, by which the Begums held their property, as no longer binding upon the English Government, who consequently could have no further right to interfere between the Nabob and his rebellious parents, but ought to leave him at liberty to punish or forgive them as he should think fit. But, instead of holding this language, which manliness and conscious integrity would have dictated, had he been convinced of the guilt of the Begums, Mr. Hastings wished to derive all possible advantage from active measures against the Begums, and, at the same time, so far to save appearances as to be thought passive in the affair.

Mr. Sheridan remarked, that in another passage of the same letter upon which he had just made these observations, Mr. Middleton informed the Governor-General that he sent him at the same time a letter from the Nabob on the subject of seizing the treasures; but this letter had been suppressed. Mr. Sheridan called upon the counsel for the prisoner to produce it, and then it would speak for itself; or to account satisfactorily to their lordships for its not having been entered upon the Company's records. But this, he said, was not the only suppression of which he had reason to complain; the affidavit of Goullass Roy, who lived at Fyzabad, the residence of the Begums, and who was known to be their enemy, was suppressed. No person could be so well informed of their guilt, if they

had been guilty, as Goulass Roy, who lived upon the spot where levies were said to have been made for Cheit Sing by order of the Begums. Therefore, if his testimony had not destroyed the idea of a rebellion on the part of the Begums, there was no doubt but it would have been carefully preserved. The information of Mr. Scott had also been suppressed. That gentleman had lived unmolested at Saunda, where Sumpshire Khan commanded for the Begums, and where he had carried on an extensive manufacture without the least hindrance from this (supposed) disaffected governor, Sumpshire Khan. Mr. Scott was at Saunda when Captain Gordon arrived there, and when it was said that the governor pointed the guns of the fort upon Captain Gordon's party. If this circumstance had really happened, Mr. Scott must have heard of it, as he was himself at the time under the protection of those very guns. Why, then, was not the examination of this gentleman produced? He believed their lordships were satisfied that if it had supported the allegations against Sumpshire Khan, it would not have been suppressed.

Mr. Sheridan said, it was not clear to him that, servile a tool as Mr. Middleton was, Mr. Hastings had thought proper to intrust him with every part of his intentions throughout the business of the Begums; he certainly mistrusted, or pretended to mistrust him, in his proceedings relative to the resumption of the jaghires, when it began to be rumored abroad that terms so favorable to the Nabob, as he obtained in the treaty of Chunar, by which Mr. Hastings consented to withdraw the temporary brigade, and to remove the English gentlemen from Oude, would never have been granted, if the Nabob had not bribed the parties concerned in the negotiation to betray the interest

of the Company. As soon as these rumors reached the ears of Mr. Hastings he accused Mr. Middleton and his assistant-resident, Mr. Johnson, with having accepted bribes from the Nabob. They both joined in the most solemn assurances of their innocence, and called God to witness the truth of their declarations. Mr. Hastings, after this, appeared satisfied; possibly the consciousness that he had in his own pocket the only bribe which had been given on the occasion (the £100,000), might have made him the less earnest in prosecuting any further inquiry into the business.

From a passage in a letter from Mr. Hastings, it was clear he did not think proper to commit to writing all the orders that he wished Mr. Middleton to execute; for there Mr. Hastings expressed his doubts of that person's "firmness and activity; and, above all, of his recollection of his instructions, and their importance; and said, that if he (Mr. Middleton) could not rely on his own power, and the means he possessed for performing those services, he would free him from the charge, and would proceed himself to Lucknow, and would himself undertake them."

Their lordships must presume that the instructions alluded to must have been verbal; for had they been written, there was no danger of their having been forgotten. Here Mr. Sheridan called upon the counsel to state what those instructions were which were of so much importance—which the governor was greatly afraid Mr. Middleton would not recollect—and which, nevertheless, he did not dare to commit to writing, although it would have been the most effectual way to prevent him from forgetting them.

To make their lordships understand some other expres-

sions in the above passage, Mr. Sheridan recalled to their memory that it had appeared in the evidence that Mr. Middleton had a strong objection to the resumption of the jaghires, which he thought a service of so much danger that he removed Mrs. Middleton and her family when he was about to enter upon it; for he expected resistance not only from the Begums, but from the Nabob's own aumeels, who, knowing that the Nabob was a reluctant instrument in the hands of the English, thought they would please him by resisting a measure to which they knew he had given his authority against his will; in a word, Mr. Middleton expected that the whole country, as one man, would rise against him; and therefore it was that he suspended the execution of the order of resumption, until he should find whether the seizing of the treasures, proposed as an alternative, would be accepted as such. Mr. Hastings pressed him to execute the order for resuming the jaghires, and offered to go himself upon that service, if the other should decline it. Mr. Middleton at last having received a thundering letter from Mr. Hastings, by which he left him to act under "a dreadful responsibility," set out for Fyzabad. For all the cruelties and barbarities that were executed there, the Governor-General in his narrative said he did not hold himself responsible, because he had commanded Mr. Middleton to be personally present during the whole of the transaction, until he should have completed the business of seizing the treasures and resuming the jaghires. But for what purpose had he ordered Mr. Middleton to be present? He would answer by quoting the orders verbatim. "You yourself must be personally present—you must not allow any negotiation or forbearance, but must prosecute both services until the

Begums are at the entire mercy of the Nabobs." These peremptory orders, given under a "dreadful responsibility," were not issued for purposes of humanity, that the presence of the resident might restrain the violence of the soldiers, but that Mr. Middleton should be a watch upon the Nabob, to steel his heart against the feelings of returning nature in his breast, and prevent the possibility of his relenting, or granting any terms to his mother and grandmother. This was the abominable purpose for which Mr. Hastings had commanded him to be present in person; and, on account of his presence for such an end, Mr. Hastings pleaded that he was not responsible for what was done on that occasion at Fyzabad.

FRIDAY, JUNE 13

MR. SHERIDAN began by apologizing for the interruption which his indisposition had caused on the former day. He assured their lordships, in the strongest terms, that nothing but the importance of the cause, to which he felt himself totally unable to do justice, could have made him trespass on that indulgence which, on other occasions, he had so amply experienced.

He had then concluded, with submitting to their lordships the whole of the correspondence, as far as it could be obtained, between the principals and agents, in the nefarious plot carried on against the Nabob Vizier and the Begums of Oude. These letters were worthy the most abstracted attention of their lordships, as containing not only a narrative of that foul and unmanly conspiracy, but also

a detail of the motives and ends for which it was formed, and an exposition of the trick, the quibble, the prevarication, and the untruth with which it was then acted, and now attempted to be defended! The question would undoubtedly suggest itself, why the correspondence ever was produced by the parties against whom it was now adduced in evidence, and who had so much reason to distrust the propriety of their own conduct? To this the answer was, that it was owing to a mutual and providential resentment which had broken out between the parties, which was generally the case between persons concerned in such transactions. Mr. Middleton was incensed, and felt as a galling triumph the confidence reposed by the Governor-General in other agents. Mr. Hastings was offended by the tardy wariness which marked the conduct of Middleton; by the various remonstrances by the agent—though as knowing the man to whom they were addressed, they were all grounded on motives of policy—not of humanity—and of expediency, which left justice entirely out of the question; but the great ostensible ground of quarrel was, that Middleton had dared to spend two days in negotiation—though that delay had prevented the general massacre of upward of two thousand persons! The real cause, however, of this difference, was a firm belief on the part of Mr. Hastings, that Mr. Middleton had inverted their different situations, and kept the lion's share of plunder to himself. There were, undoubtedly, some circumstances to justify this suspicion. At the time when Mr. Hastings had first complained the Nabob's treasury was empty, and his troops so mutinous for their pay as even to threaten his life, yet in this moment of gratitude and opulence, Middleton intimated the Nabob's desire to make Mr. Hastings

a present of £100,000. That sacrifice, however, not being deemed sufficient, Mr. Middleton was recalled, and Major Palmer was sent in his room with instructions to tell the Nabob that such a donation was not to be attempted: the prince, however, with an unfortunate want of recollection, said, that "no such offer had ever been in his mind." Thus, it had always been considered as the heightening of a favor bestowed, that the receiver should not know from what quarter it came; but it was reserved for Mr. Middleton to improve on this by such a delicate refinement, that the person giving should be totally ignorant of the favor he conferred!

But notwithstanding these little differences and suspicions, Mr. Hastings and Mr. Middleton, on the return of the latter to Calcutta in October, 1782, continued to live in the same style of friendly collusion, and fraudulent familiarity as ever. But when Mr. Bristow, not answering the purposes of Mr. Hastings, was accused on the suborned letters procured from the Nabob, one of which pronounced him the blackest character in existence, while another, of the same date, spoke of him as a very honest fellow, Mr. Hastings thought it might appear particular; and, therefore, after their intimacy of six months, accuses Mr. Middleton also before the board at Calcutta. It was then that in the rash eagerness which distinguished his pursuit of every object, Mr. Hastings had incautiously, but happily for the present purposes of justice, brought forth these secret letters. It mattered not what were the views which induced Mr. Hastings to bring that charge; whether he had drawn up the accusation, or obliged Mr. Middleton with his aid in framing a defence; the whole ended in a repartee, and a poetical quotation from the

Governor-General. The only circumstance material to the purposes of humanity, was the production of instruments by which those who had violated every principle of justice and benevolence were to see their guilt explained, and it was to be hoped, to experience that punishment which they deserved.

To those private letters it was that their lordships were to look for whatever elucidation of the subject could be drawn from the parties concerned: written in the moments of confidence, they declared the real motive and object of each measure; the public letters were only to be regarded as proofs of guilt, whenever they established a contradiction. The counsel for the prisoner had chosen, as the safest ground, to rely on the public letters, written for the concealment of fraud and purpose of deception. They had, for instance, particularly dwelt on a public letter from Mr. Middleton, dated in December, 1781, which intimated some particulars of supposed contumacy in the Begums, with a view to countenance the transactions which shortly after took place, and particularly the resumption of the jaghires. But this letter both Sir Elijah Impey and Mr. Middleton had admitted, in their examination at that bar, to be totally false; though if it were in every point true, the apprehension of resistance to a measure could not by any means be made a ground for the enforcement of that measure in the first instance. The counsel seemed displeased with Mr. Middleton for the answer, and therefore repeated the question. The witness, however, did not really fall into their humor; for he declared that he did not recollect a particle of the letter; and though memory was undoubtedly not the forte of Mr. Middleton, he was not, perhaps, entirely faulty on

this occasion, as the letter was certainly of a later fabrication, and perhaps not from his hand. This letter, however, was also in direct contradiction to every one of the defences set up by Mr. Hastings.—Another public letter, which had been equally dwelt on, spoke of the “determination of the Nabob” to resume the jaghires. It had appeared in evidence that the Nabob could by no means be compelled to yield to their measures—that it was not until Mr. Middleton had actually issued his own perwannas for the collection of the rents, that the Nabob, rather than be brought to the utmost state of degradation, agreed to let the measure be brought forward as his own act! The resistance of the Begums to that measure was noticed in the same letter as an instance of female levity—as if their defence of the property assigned for their subsistence was to be made a reproach—or that they deserved a reproof for female lightness, by entertaining a feminine objection to their being starved!

This resistance to the measure, which was expected, and the consoling slaughter on which Mr. Hastings relied, were looked to in all those letters as a justification of the measure itself. There was not the smallest mention of the anterior rebellion, which by prudent afterthought had been so greatly magnified. There was not a syllable of those dangerous machinations which were to have dethroned the Nabob; of those sanguinary artifices by which the English were to have been extirpated.—Not a particle concerning those practices was mentioned in any of Middleton's letters to Hastings, or in the still more confidential communication which he maintained with Sir Elijah Impey; though after the latter his letters were continually posting, even when the chief-justice was travelling round

the country in search of affidavits. When on the 28th of November, he was busied at Lucknow on that honorable business, and when three days after, he was found at Chunar, at the distance of two hundred miles, prompting his instruments, and like Hamlet's ghost exclaiming—"Swear!"—his progress on that occasion was so whimsically sudden, when contrasted with the gravity of his employ, that an observer would be tempted to quote again from the same scene—"Ha! Old Truepenny, canst thou mole so fast i' the ground?"—Here, however, the comparison ceased—for when Sir Elijah made his visit to Lucknow, "to whet the almost blunted purpose" of the Nabob, his language was wholly different from that of the poet—it would have been much against his purpose to have said,

"Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught!"

On the subject of those affidavits, he would only make another single observation. Sir Elijah Impey had denied all acquaintance with their contents, though he had been actually accompanied to Buxar by Major Davy, who there translated them from the Persian, for the use of Mr. Hastings! There was among them an affidavit, taken in English, from a native at Buxar, but which was first explained to the deponent by Major Davy in the presence of Sir Elijah Impey. How far therefore the assertion of the chief-justice was plausible, and how far this fact was consistent with that assertion, he should leave it to their lordships to determine.

It was in some degree observable that not one of the private letters of Mr. Hastings had been produced at any

time. Even Middleton, when all confidence was broken between them by the production of his private correspondence at Calcutta, either feeling for his own safety, or sunk under the fascinating influence of his master, did not dare attempt a retaliation! The letters of Middleton, however, were sufficient to prove the situation of the Nabob, when pressed to the measure of resuming the jaghires, in which he had been represented as acting wholly from himself. He was there described as lost in sullen melancholy—with feelings agitated beyond expression, and with every mark of agonized sensibility. To such a degree was this apparent, that even Middleton was moved to interfere for a temporary respite, in which he might be more reconciled to the measure. "I am fully of opinion," said he, "that the despair of the Nabob must impel him to violence; I know also that the violence must be fatal to himself; but yet I think, that with his present feelings he will disregard all consequences." Mr. Johnson also, the assistant-resident, wrote at the same time to Mr. Hastings, to aver to him that the measure was dangerous, that it would require a total reform of the collection, which could not be made without a campaign! This was British justice! this was British humanity! Mr. Hastings insures to the allies of the Company, in the strongest terms, their prosperity and his protection; the former he secures by sending an army to plunder them of their wealth and to desolate their soil! His protection is fraught with a similar security, like that of a vulture to a lamb; grappling in its vitals! thirsting for its blood! scaring off each petty kite that hovers round; and then, with an insulting perversion of terms, calling sacrifice protection!—an object for which history seeks for any similarity in vain. The deep searching

annals of Tacitus; the luminous philosophy of Gibbon; all the records of man's transgressing, from original sin to the present period, dwindle into comparative insignificance of enormity, both in aggravation of vile principles, and extent of their consequential ruin! The victims of this oppression were confessedly destitute of all power to resist their oppressors; but that debility, which from other bosoms would have claimed some compassion, with respect to the mode of suffering, here excited but the ingenuity of torture! Even when every feeling of the Nabob was subdued, nature made a lingering, feeble stand within his bosom; but even then that cold, unfeeling spirit of magnanimity, with whom his doom was fixed, returned with double acrimony to its purpose, and compelled him to inflict on a parent that destruction, of which he was himself reserved but to be the last victim!

Yet, when cruelty seemed to have reached its bounds, and guilt to have ascended to its climax, there was something in the character of Mr. Hastings which seemed to transcend the latter, and overleap the former; and of this kind was the letter to the Nabob which was despatched on this occasion. To rebuke Mr. Middleton for his moderation, as was instantly done, was easily performed through the medium of a public and a private letter. But to write to the Nabob in such a manner that the command might be conveyed, and yet the letter afterward shown to the world, was a task of more difficulty, but which it appeared by the event was admirably suited to the genius of Mr. Hastings. His letter was dated the 15th of February, 1782, though the jaghires had been then actually seized; and it was in proof that it had been sent at a much earlier period. He there assured the Nabob of his

coincidence with his wishes respecting the resumption of the jaghires; he declares, that if he found any difficulty in the measure, he, Mr. Hastings, would go to his assistance in person, and lend his aid to punish those who opposed it; "for that nothing could be more ardent than his friendship, or more eager than his zeal for his welfare." The most desperate intention was clothed in the mildest language. But the Nabob knew, by sad experience, the character with whom he had to deal, and therefore was not to be deceived; he saw the dagger glistening in the hand which was treacherously extended, as if to his assistance, and from that moment the last faint ray of nature expired in his bosom. Mr. Middleton from that time extended his iron sceptre without resistance; the jaghires were seized—every measure was carried—and the Nabob, with his feelings lacerated and his dignity degraded, was no longer considered as an object of regard. Though these were circumstances exasperating to the human heart which felt the smallest remains of sensibility, yet it was necessary, in idea, to review the whole from the time that this treachery was first conceived, to that when, by a series of artifices the most execrable, it was brought to a completion. Mr. Hastings would there be seen standing aloof indeed, but not inactive in the war! He would be discovered in reviewing his agents, rebuking at one time the pale conscience of Mr. Middleton, and at another relying on the stouter villany of Hyder Beg Khan. With all the calmness of veteran delinquency, his eye ranged through the busy prospect, piercing through the darkness of subordinate guilt, and arranging with congenial adroitness the tools of his crimes, and the instruments of his cruelty.

The feelings of the several parties at the time would be most properly judged of by their respective correspondence. When the Bow Begum, despairing of redress from the Nabob, addressed herself to Mr. Middleton, and reminded him of the guarantee which he had signed, she was instantly promised that the amount of her jaghire should be made good; though Mr. Middleton said he could not interfere with the sovereign decision of the Nabob respecting the lands. The deluded and unfortunate woman "thanked God that Mr. Middleton was at hand for her relief," at the very instant when he was directing every effort to her destruction; when he had actually written the orders which were to take the collection out of the hands of her agents! Even when the Begum was undeceived—when she found that British faith was no protection—when she found that she should leave the country, and prayed to the god of nations not to grant his peace to those who remained behind, still there was no charge of rebellion—no recrimination made to all her reproaches for the broken faith of the English—nay, when stung to madness, she asked "how long would be their reign"? No mention of her disaffection was brought forward; the stress was therefore idle, which the counsel for the prisoner strove to lay on these expressions of an injured and enraged woman. When, at last, irritated beyond bearing, she denounced infamy on the heads of her oppressors, who was there who would not say that she spoke in a prophetic spirit, and that what she had then predicted had not even to its last letter been accomplished! But did Mr. Middleton, even to this violence, retort any particle of accusation? No; he sent a jocose reply, stating that he had received such a letter under her

seal, but that from its contents he could not suspect it to come from her; and hoping, therefore, that she might detect the forgery! Thus did he add to foul injuries the vile aggravation of a brutal jest; like the tiger that prowls over the scene where his ravages were committed, he showed the savageness of his nature by grinning over his prey, and fawning over the last agonies of his unfortunate victim.

Those letters were then inclosed to the Nabob, who, no more than the rest, made any attempt to justify himself by imputing criminality to the Begums. He merely sighed a hope that his conduct to his parents had drawn no shame upon his head; and declared his intention to punish—not any disaffection in the Begum—but some officious servants who had dared to foment the misunderstanding between them and the Nabob. A letter was finally sent to Mr. Hastings, about six days before the seizure of the treasure from the Begums, declaring their innocence, and referring the Governor-General to Captain Gordon, whose life they had protected, and whose safety should have been their justification. That inquiry was never made; it was looked on as unnecessary; because the conviction of their innocence was too deeply impressed!

The counsel, in recommending attention to the public in preference to the private letters, had remarked, in particular, that one letter should not be taken as evidence, because it was manifestly and abstractedly private, as it contained in one part the anxieties of Mr. Middleton for the illness of his son. This was a singular argument, indeed; and the circumstance, in his mind, merited strict observation, though not in the view in which it was placed by the counsel. It went to show that some, at least, of those concerned in these transactions, felt the

force of those ties which their efforts were directed to tear asunder—that those who could ridicule the respective attachment of a mother and a son—who would prohibit the reverence of the son to the mother who had given him life—who could deny to maternal debility the protection which filial tenderness should afford!—were yet sensible of the straining of those chords by which they were connected. There was something connected with this transaction so wretchedly horrible, and so vilely loathsome, as to excite the most contemptible disgust. If it were not a part of his duty, it would be superfluous to speak of the sacredness of the ties which those aliens to feeling—those apostates to humanity—had thus divided. In such an assembly as that which I have the honor of addressing, there is not an eye but must dart reproof at this conduct—not a heart but must anticipate its condemnation. “*Filial piety!*—It is the primal bond of society—it is that instinctive principle which, panting for its proper good, soothes, unbidden, each sense and sensibility of man!—it now quivers on every lip!—it now beams from every eye!—it is an emanation of that gratitude which, softening under the sense of recollected good, is eager to own the vast countless debt it ne’er, alas! can pay, for so many long years of unceasing solitudes, honorable self-denials, life-preserving cares!—it is that part of our practice where duty drops its awe!—where reverence refines into love!—it asks no aid of memory!—it needs not the deductions of reason!—pre-existing, paramount over all, whether law, or human rule, few arguments can increase and none can diminish it!—it is the sacrament of our nature!—not only the duty, but the indulgence of man—it is his first great privilege—it is among his last most endearing

delights!—it causes the bosom to glow with reverberated love!—it requites the visitations of nature, and returns the blessings that have been received!—it fires emotion into vital principle—it renders habituated instinct into a master-passion—sways all the sweetest energies of man—hangs over each vicissitude of all that must pass away—aids the melancholy virtues in their last sad tasks of life, to cheer the languors of decrepitude and age—explores the thought—elucidates the aching eye!—and breathes sweet consolation even in the awful moment of dissolution!"

The jaghires being seized, Mr. Sheridan proceeded to observe, the Begums were left without the smallest share of that pecuniary compensation promised by Mr. Middleton; and as, when tyranny and injustice take the field, they are always attended by their camp-followers, paltry pilfering, and petty insult—so, in this instance, the goods taken from them were sold at a mock sale at inferior value. Even gold and jewels, to use the language of the Begums, instantly lost their value when it was known that they came from them! Their ministers were therefore imprisoned to extort the deficiency which this fraud had occasioned; and those mean arts were employed to justify a continuance of cruelty. Yet, these again were little to the frauds of Mr. Hastings. After extorting upward of £600,000, he forbade Mr. Middleton to come to a conclusive settlement. He knew that the treasons of our allies in India had their origin solely in the wants of the Company. He could not, therefore, say that the Begums were entirely innocent, until he had consulted the general record of crimes!—the cash account at Calcutta! And this prudence of Mr. Hastings was fully justified by the event; for there was actually found a balance of twenty-six lacs

more against the Begums, which £260,000 worth of treason had never been dreamed of before: "Talk not to us," said the Governor-General, "of their guilt, or innocence, but as it suits the Company's credit! We will not try them by the code of Justinian, nor the institutes of Timur—we will not judge them either by the British laws, or their local customs! No! we will try them by the multiplication table—we will find them guilty by the rule of three—and we will condemn them according to the sapient and profound institutes of—Cocker's Arithmetic!"

Proceeding next to state the distresses of the Begums in the zenana, and of the women in the Khord Mahal, Mr. Sheridan stated that some observation was due to the remark made by Mr. Hastings in his defence, where he declared "that whatever were the distresses there, and whoever was the agent, the measure was, in his opinion, reconcilable to justice, honor, and sound policy." Major Scott, the incomparable agent of Mr. Hastings, had declared this passage to have been written by Mr. Hastings with his own hand. Mr. Middleton, it appeared, had also avowed his share in those humane transactions, and blushing retired. Mr. Hastings then cheered his drooping spirits. "Whatever part of the load," said he, "yours cannot bear, my unburdened character shall assume. I will crown your labors with my irresistible approbation. Thus, twin-warriors, we shall go forth! you find memory, and I'll find character—and assault, repulse, and contumely shall all be set at defiance!"

If I could not prove, continued Mr. Sheridan, that those acts of Mr. Middleton were in reality the acts of Mr. Hastings, I should not trouble your lordships by combating these assertions; but as that part of his criminality

can be incontestibly ascertained, I shall unequivocally appeal to the assembled legislators of this realm, and call on them to say whether those acts were justifiable on the score of policy. I shall appeal to all the august presidents in the courts of British jurisprudence, and to all the learned ornaments of the profession, to decide whether these actions were reconcilable to justice. I shall appeal to a reverend assemblage of prelates, feeling for the general interests of humanity, and for the honor of the religion to which they belong—let them determine in their own minds whether those acts of Mr. Hastings and Mr. Middleton were such as a Christian ought to perform, or a man to avow!

He next detailed the circumstances of the imprisonment of Bahr Ally Khan and Jewar Ally Khan, the ministers of the Nabob, on the grounds above stated; with them was confined that arch-rebel, Sumpshire Khan, by whom every act of hostility that had taken place against the English was stated to have been committed. No inquiry, however, was made concerning his treason, though many had been held respecting the treasure of the others. He was not so far noticed as to be deprived of his food; nor was he even complimented with fetters! and yet, when he is on a future day to be informed of the mischiefs he was now stated to have done, he must think that on being forgotten he had a very providential escape! The others were, on the contrary, taken from their milder prison at Fyzabad; and when threats could effect nothing, transferred by the meek humanity of Mr. Middleton to the fortress of Chunargur. There, where the British flag was flying, they were doomed to deeper dungeons, heavier chains, and severer punishments—there, where that flag was flying which was wont to cheer the depressed, and to

elate the subdued heart of misery, these venerable but unfortunate men were fated to encounter something lower than perdition, and something blacker than despair! It appeared from the evidence of Mr. Holt and others that they were both cruelly flogged, though one was about seventy years of age, to extort a confession of the buried wealth of the Begums! Being charged with disaffection, they proclaimed their innocence. "Tell us where are the remaining treasures (was the reply)—it is only treachery to your immediate sovereigns—and you will then be fit associates for the representatives of British faith and British justice in India!"—"O Faith! O Justice!" exclaimed Mr. Sheridan, "I conjure you, by your sacred names, to depart for a moment from this place, though it be your peculiar residence; nor hear your names profaned by such a sacrilegious combination as that which I am now compelled to repeat!—where all the fair forms of nature and art, truth and peace, policy and honor, shrunk back aghast from the deleterious shade!—where all existences, nefarious and vile, had sway!—where, amid the black agents on one side, and Middleton with Impey on the other, the toughest head, the most unfeeling heart! the great figure of the piece, characteristic in his place, stood aloof and independent from the puny profligacy in his train!—but far from idle and inactive—turning a malignant eye on all mischief that awaited him!—the multiplied apparatus of temporizing expedients, and intimidating instruments! now cringing on his prey and fawning on his vengeance!—now quickening the limpid pace of craft, and forcing every stand that retiring nature can make in the heart! violating the attachments and the decorums of life! sacrificing every emotion of tenderness and honor! and

flagitiously levelling all the distinctions of national characteristics! with a long catalogue of crimes and aggravations, beyond the reach of thought for human malignity to perpetrate, or human vengeance to punish!

It might have been hoped, for the honor of the human heart, that the Begums had been themselves exempted from a share in these sufferings; and that they had been wounded only through the sides of their ministers. The reverse of this, however, was the fact. Their palace was surrounded by a guard, which was withdrawn by Major Gilpin, to avoid the growing resentments of the people, and replaced by Mr. Middleton, through his fears from that "dreadful responsibility" which was imposed on him by Mr. Hastings. The women of the Khord Mahal, who had not been involved in the Begums' supposed crimes; who had raised no sub-rebellion of their own; and who, it had been proved, lived in a distinct dwelling, were causelessly involved in the same punishment; their residence surrounded with guards, they were driven to despair by famine, and when they poured forth in sad procession, were driven back by the soldiery, and beaten with bludgeons to the scene of madness which they had quitted. These were acts, Mr. Sheridan observed, which, when told, needed no comment; he should not offer a single syllable to awaken their lordships' feelings; but leave it to the facts which had been proved, to make their own impressions.

The argument now reverted solely to this point, whether Mr. Hastings was to be answerable for the crimes committed by his agent? It had been fully proved that Mr. Middleton had signed the treaty with the superior Begum in October, 1778. He had acknowledged signing some others of other dates, but could not recollect his authority. These

treaties had been fully recognized by Mr. Hastings, as was fully proved by the evidence of Mr. Purling, in the year 1780. In that of October, 1778, the jaghire was secured which was allotted for the support of the women in the Khord Mahal: on the first idea of resuming these jaghires a provision should have been secured to those unfortunate women; and in this respect Mr. Hastings was clearly guilty of a crime, by his omission of making such provision. But still he pleaded that he was not accountable for the cruelties which had been exercised. This was the plea which Tyranny, aided by its prime minister Treachery, was always sure to set up. Mr. Middleton had attempted to strengthen this plea by endeavoring to claim the whole infamy of those transactions, and to monopolize the guilt! He dared even to aver that he had been condemned by Mr. Hastings for the ignominious part he had acted: he dared to avow this, because Mr. Hastings was on his trial, and he thought he should never be tried—but in the face of the court, and before he left the bar, he was compelled to confess that it was for the lenience, not the severity, of his proceedings, that he had been reproved by Mr. Hastings.

It would not, he trusted, be argued that because Mr. Hastings had not marked every passing shade of guilt, and because he had only given the bold outline of cruelty, that he was therefore to be acquitted. It was laid down by the law of England—that law which was the perfection of reason—that a person ordering an act to be done by his agent, was answerable for that act with all its consequences. Middleton had been appointed, in 1777, the avowed and private agent—the second-self—of Mr. Hastings. The Governor-General had ordered the measure: Middleton declared that it could not have been ef-

fectured by milder means. Even if he never saw, nor heard afterward of the consequences of the measure, he was answerable for every pang that was inflicted, and for all the blood that was shed. But he had heard, and that instantly, of the whole. He had written to arraign Middleton of forbearance and of neglect! He commanded them to work upon their hopes and fears, and to leave no means untried, until—to speak their own language, but which would be better suited to the banditti of a cavern—“they obtained possession of the secret hoards of the old ladies.” He would not allow even of a delay of two days to smooth the compelled approaches of a son to his mother, on such an occasion! His orders were peremptory; and if a massacre did not take place, it was the merit of accident, and not of Mr. Hastings. After this would it be said that the prisoner was ignorant of the acts, or not culpable for their consequences? It was true, he had not enjoined in so many words the guards, the famine, and the bludgeons; he had not weighed the fetters, nor numbered the lashes to be inflicted on his victims. But yet he was equally guilty, as if he had borne an active and personal share in each transaction. It was as if he had commanded that the heart should be torn from the bosom, and yet had enjoined that no blood should follow. He was in the same degree accountable to the law, to his country, to his conscience, and to his God!

Mr. Hastings had endeavored also to get rid of a part of his guilt, by observing that he was but one of the supreme council, and that all the rest had sanctioned those transactions with their approbation. If Mr. Hastings could prove, however, that others participated in the guilt, it would not tend to diminish his own criminality. But the

fact was, that the council had in nothing erred so much as in a criminal credulity given to the declarations of the Governor-General. They knew not a word of those transactions until they were finally concluded. It was not until the January following that they saw the mass of falsehood which had been published under the title of "Mr. Hastings' Narrative." They had been then unaccountably duped into the suffering a letter to pass, dated the 29th of November, intended to deceive the directors into a belief that they had received intelligence at that time, which was not the fact. These observations, Mr. Sheridan said, were not meant to cast any obloquy on the council; they had undoubtedly been deceived, and the deceit practiced on them by making them sign the Narrative, was of itself a strong accusation of Mr. Hastings, and a decided proof of his own consciousness of guilt. When tired of corporeal infliction, his tyranny was gratified by insulting the understanding. Other tyrants, though born to greatness, such as a Nero or a Caligula, might have been roused, it had been supposed, by reflection, and awakened into contrition; but here was an instance which spurned at theory and baffled supposition: a man born to a state at least of equality; inured to calculation, and brought up in habits of reflection; and yet proving in the end that monster in nature, a deliberate and reasoning tyrant.

The board of directors received those advices which Mr. Hastings thought proper to transmit; but though unfurnished with any other materials to form their judgments, they expressed very strongly their doubts, and as properly ordered an inquiry into the circumstances of the alleged disaffection of the Begums; pronouncing it, at the

same time, a debt which was due to the honor and justice of the British nation. This inquiry, however, on the directions reaching India, Mr. Hastings thought it absolutely necessary to elude. He stated to the council, it being merely stated that "if on inquiry certain facts appeared," no inquiry was thereby directly enjoined! "It would revive (said he) those animosities that subsisted between the Begums and the Vizier, which had then subsided. If the former were inclined to appeal to a foreign jurisdiction, they were the best judges of their own feeling, and should be left to make their own complaint." All this, however, was nothing to the magnificent paragraph which concluded this minute, and to which Mr. Sheridan also requested the attention of the court. "Beside (said Mr. Hastings), I hope it will not be a departure from official language to say, that the majesty of justice ought not to be approached without solicitation; she ought not to descend to inflame or provoke, but to withhold her judgment, until she is called on to determine!" What is still more astonishing is, that Sir John Macpherson (who, though a gentleman of sense and honor, he stated to be rather Oriental in his imagination, and not learned in the sublime and beautiful, formed the immortal leader of this prosecution, and who had before opposed Mr. Hastings) was caught by this bold bombastic quibble, and joined in the same words, "that the majesty of justice ought not to be approached without solicitation."

But justice is not this halt and miserable object! (continued Mr. Sheridan) it is not the ineffective bawble of an Indian pagod!—it is not the portentous phantom of despair; it is not like any fabled monster, formed in the eclipse of reason, and found in some unhallowed grove

of superstitious darkness and political dismay! No, my lords!

In the happy reverse of all these, I turn from this disgusting caricature to the real image! Justice I have now before me, august and pure; the abstract idea of all that would be perfect in the spirits and the aspirations of men! where the mind rises, where the heart expands; where the countenance is ever placid and benign—where her favorite attitude is to stoop to the unfortunate—to hear their cry and to help them—to rescue and relieve, to succor and save: majestic from its mercy: venerable from its utility: uplifted without pride—firm without obduracy: beneficent in each preference: lovely, though in her frown.

On that justice I rely; deliberate and sure, abstracted from all party purpose and political speculations! not in words, but on facts! You, my lords, who hear me, I conjure by those rights it is your best privilege to preserve; by that fame it is your best pleasure to inherit; by all those feelings which refer to the first term in the series of existence, the original compact of our nature—our controlling rank in the creation. This is the call on all to administer to truth and equity, as they would satisfy the laws and satisfy themselves, with the most exalted bliss possible, or conceivable for our nature—the self-approving consciousness of virtue, when the condemnation we look for will be one of the most ample mercies accomplished for mankind since the creation of the world!

My lords, I have done.

WILLIAM PITT

WILLIAM PITT, the second son of Lord Chatham, was born in 1750. He was educated by a private tutor under the paternal roof. It is said that, before the lad had completed his fifteenth year, his knowledge, both of the ancient languages and of mathematics, was such as very few men of eighteen then carried up to college. Toward the close of 1773, he matriculated at Pembroke Hall in the University of Cambridge. In the spring of 1780 he was called to the bar, and in January of the following year entered the House of Commons. His first speech astonished and delighted his hearers. Burke, moved to tears, is said to have exclaimed, "It is not a chip of the old block; it is the old block itself." Pitt entered Parliament as a Whig, and in July, 1782, having scarcely completed his twenty-third year, attained the place of Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Shelburne Cabinet. When Shelburne was forced to resign by the coalition of Fox and North, Pitt became the leader of the Opposition, and when the Lords rejected the India bill introduced by the Whig Government, Pitt was invited by the King to form a Ministry, and to that end he accepted the posts of First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. There was a large adverse majority in the House of Commons, but he made head against it from December, 1783, to March, 1784, when he appealed to the country and gained a decisive victory. Thenceforth until 1801, he was the greatest subject that England had seen during many generations. He domineered absolutely over the Cabinet, and was the favorite at once of the sovereign, of Parliament and of the nation. His father had never been so powerful, nor had Walpole, nor had Marlborough. In the House of Commons he was compelled to face, almost single-handed, such men as Fox, Burke and Sheridan, but he was ranked above them by almost the unanimous judgment of his contemporaries. In 1801 he resigned office on account of the King's refusal to permit him to fulfil the promise, made at the time of the union of Great Britain and Ireland, to relieve Roman Catholics from civil disabilities. In May, 1804, he resumed the post of Premier, but died in January, 1806, having sunk under the news of the battle of Austerlitz. He was in his forty-seventh year, and he had been for nineteen years undisputed chief of the British administration.

AGAINST FRENCH REPUBLICANISM

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS JUNE 7, 1799

I WISH, sir, to offer such an explanation on some of the topics dwelt upon by the honorable gentleman who just sat down [Mr. Tierney] as will, I think, satisfy the committee and the honorable gentleman. The nature of the engagement to which the message would pledge the House is simply, that, first, for the purpose of setting the Russian army in motion, we shall advance to that country £225,000—part of it by instalments, to accompany the subsidy to be paid when the army is in actual service. And I believe no one who has been the least attentive to the progress of affairs in the world, who can appreciate worth and admire superior zeal and activity, will doubt the sincerity of the sovereign of Russia, or make a question of his integrity in any compact. The second head of distribution is £75,000 per month, to be paid at the expiration of every succeeding month of service; and lastly, a subsidy of £87,500 to be paid after the war, on the conclusion of a peace by common consent. Now I think it strange that the honorable gentleman should charge us with want of prudence, while it cannot be unknown to him that the principal subsidies are not to be paid until the service has been performed, and that in one remarkable instance the present subsidy differs from every other, inasmuch as a part of it is not to be paid until after the conclusion of a peace by common consent. I think gentlemen would act more consistently if they would openly give their opposition on the principle

that they cannot support the war under any circumstances of the country and of Europe, than in this equivocal and cold manner to embarrass our deliberations and throw obstacles in the way of all vigorous co-operation. There is no reason, no ground to fear that that magnanimous prince will act with infidelity in a cause in which he is so sincerely engaged, and which he knows to be the cause of all good government, of religion, and humanity, against a monstrous medley of tyranny, injustice, vanity, irreligion, and folly. Of such an ally there can be no reason to be jealous; and least of all have the honorable gentlemen opposite me grounds of jealousy, considering the nature and circumstances of our engagements with that monarch. As to the sum itself, I think no man can find fault with it. In fact, it is comparatively small. We take into our pay forty-five thousand of the troops of Russia, and I believe if any gentleman will look to all former subsidies, the result will be, that never was so large a body of men subsidized for so small a sum. This fact cannot be considered without feeling that this magnanimous and powerful prince has undertaken to supply at a very trifling expense a most essential force, and that for the deliverance of Europe. I still must use this phrase, notwithstanding the sneers of the honorable gentlemen. Does it not promise the deliverance of Europe, when we find the armies of our allies rapidly advancing in a career of victory at once the most brilliant and auspicious that perhaps ever signalized the exertions of any combination? Will it be regarded with apathy, that that wise and vigorous and exalted prince has already, by his promptness and decision, given a turn to the affairs of the Continent? Is the House to be called upon to refuse succor to our ally, who,

by his prowess, and the bravery of his arms, has attracted so much of the attention and admiration of Europe?

The honorable gentleman says he wishes for peace, and that he approved more of what I said on this subject toward the close of my speech, than of the opening. Now what I said was, that if by powerfully seconding the efforts of our allies, we could only look for peace with any prospect of realizing our hopes, whatever would enable us to do so promptly and effectually would be true economy. I must, indeed, be much misunderstood, if generally it was not perceived that I meant that whether the period which is to carry us to peace be shorter or longer, what we have to look to is not so much when we make peace, as whether we shall derive from it complete and solid security; and that whatever other nations may do, whether they shall persevere in the contest, or untimely abandon it, we have to look to ourselves for the means of defence, we are to look to the means to secure our Constitution, preserve our character, and maintain our independence, in the virtue and perseverance of the people. There is a high-spirited pride, an elevated loyalty, a generous warmth of heart, a nobleness of spirit, a hearty, manly gayety, which distinguish our nation, in which we are to look for the best pledges of general safety, and of that security against an aggressing usurpation, which other nations in their weakness or in their folly have yet nowhere found. With respect to that which appears so much to embarrass certain gentlemen—the deliverance of Europe—I will not say particularly what it is. Whether it is to be its deliverance from that under which it suffers, or that from which it is in danger; whether from the infection of false principles, the corroding cares of a period of distraction and

dismay, or that dissolution of all governments, and that death of religion and social order which are to signalize the triumph of the French republic, if unfortunately for mankind she should, in spite of all opposition, prevail in the contest—from whichever of these Europe is to be delivered, it will not be difficult to prove that what she suffers and what is her danger are the power and existence of the French Government. If any man says that the government is not a tyranny, he miserably mistakes the character of that body. It is an insupportable and odious tyranny, holding within its grasp the lives, the characters, and the fortunes of all who are forced to own its sway, and only holding these that it may at will measure out of each the portion which from time to time it sacrifices to its avarice, its cruelty, and injustice. The French Republic is diked and fenced round with crime, and owes much of its present security to its being regarded with a horror which appals men in their approaches to its impious battlements.

The honorable gentleman says that he does not know whether the emperor of Russia understands what we mean by the deliverance of Europe. I do not think it proper here to dwell much at length on this curious doubt. But whatever may be the meaning which that august personage attaches to our phrase, "the deliverance of Europe," at least he has shown that he is no stranger to the condition of the world; that whatever be the specific object of the contest, he has learned rightly to consider the character of the common enemy, and shows by his public proceedings that he is determined to take measures of more than ordinary precaution against the common disturbers of Europe and the common enemy of man. Will the honorable gen-

tleman continue in his state of doubt? Let him look to the conduct of that prince during what has passed of the present campaign. If in such conduct there be not unfolded some solicitude for the deliverance of Europe from the tyranny of France, I know not, sir, in what we are to look for it. But the honorable gentleman seems to think no alliance can long be preserved against France. I do not deny that unfortunately some of the nations of Europe have shamefully crouched to that power, and receded from the common cause at a moment when it was due to their own dignity, to what they owed to that civilized community of which they are still a part, to persevere in the struggle, to reanimate their legions with that spirit of just detestation and vengeance which such inhumanity and cruelty might so well provoke. I do not say that the powers of Europe have not acted improperly in many other instances; and Russia in her turn; for, during a period of infinite peril to this country, she saw our danger advance upon us, and four different treaties entered into of offensive alliance against us, without comment, and without a single expression of its disapprobation. This was the conduct of that power in former times. The conduct of his present majesty raises quite other emotions, and excites altogether a different interest. His majesty, since his accession, has unequivocally declared his attachment to Great Britain, and, abandoning those projects of ambition which formed the occupation of his predecessor, he chose rather to join in the cause of religion and order against France than to pursue the plan marked out for him to humble and destroy a power which he was taught to consider as his common enemy. He turned aside from all hostility against the Ottoman Porte, and united his



WILLIAM PITT



force to the power of that prince the more effectually to check the progress of the common enemy. Will gentlemen then continue to regard with suspicion the conduct of that prince? Has he not sufficiently shown his devotion to the cause in which we are engaged, by the kind, and number, and value of his sacrifices, ultimately to prevail in the struggle against the tyranny which, in changing our point of vision, we everywhere find accompanied in its desolating progress by degradation, misery, and nakedness, to the unhappy victims of its power—a tyranny which has magnified and strengthened its powers to do mischief in the proportion that the legitimate and venerable fabrics of civilized and polished society have declined from the meridian of their glory and lost the power of doing good—a tyranny which strides across the ill-fated domain of France, its foot armed with the scythe of oppression and indiscriminate proscription, that touches only to blight, and rests only to destroy; the reproach and the curse of the infatuated people who still continue to acknowledge it? When we consider that it is against this monster the emperor of Russia has sent down his legions, shall we not say that he is entitled to our confidence?

But what is the constitutional state of the question? It is competent, undoubtedly, for any gentleman to make the character of an ally the subject of consideration; but in this case it is not to the emperor of Russia we vote a subsidy, but to his Majesty. The question, therefore, is, whether his Majesty's government affix any undue object to the message, whether they draw any undue inference from the deliverance of Europe. The honorable gentleman has told us that his deliverance of Europe is the driving of France within her ancient limits—that he is

not indifferent to the restoration of the other states of Europe to independence, as connected with the independence of this country; but it is assumed by the honorable gentleman that we are not content with wishing to drive France within her ancient limits—that, on the contrary, we seek to overthrow the government of France; and he would make us say that we never will treat with it as a republic. Now I neither meant anything like this, nor expressed myself so as to lead to such inferences. Whatever I may in the abstract think of the kind of government called a republic, whatever may be its fitness to the nation where it prevails, there may be times when it would not be dangerous to exist in its vicinity. But while the spirit of France remains what at present it is, its government despotic, vindictive, unjust, with a temper untamed, a character unchanged, if its power to do wrong at all remains, there does not exist any security for this country or Europe. In my view of security, every object of ambition and aggrandizement is abandoned. Our simple object is security, just security, with a little mixture of indemnification. These are the legitimate objects of war at all times; and when we have attained that end, we are in a condition to derive from peace its beneficent advantages; but until then, our duty and our interest require that we should persevere unappalled in the struggle to which we were provoked. We shall not be satisfied with a false security. War, with all its evils, is better than a peace in which there is nothing to be seen but usurpation and injustice, dwelling with savage delight on the humble, prostrate condition of some timid suppliant people. It is not to be dissembled, that in the changes and chances to which the fortunes of individuals, as well as of states, are

continually subject, we may have the misfortune, and great it would be, of seeing our allies decline the contest. I hope this will not happen. I hope it is not reserved for us to behold the mortifying spectacle of two mighty nations abandoning a contest, in which they have sacrificed so much and made such brilliant progress.

In the application of this principle I have no doubt but the honorable gentleman admits the security of the country to be the legitimate object of the contest; and I must think I am sufficiently intelligible on this topic. But wishing to be fully understood, I answer the honorable gentleman when he asks: "Does the right honorable gentleman mean to prosecute the war until the French Republic is overthrown? Is it his determination not to treat with France while it continues a republic?" I answer: I do not confine my views to the territorial limits of France; I contemplate the principles, character, and conduct of France; I consider what these are; I see in them the issues of distraction, of infamy and ruin, to every state in her alliance; and, therefore, I say that until the aspect of that mighty mass of iniquity and folly is entirely changed—until the character of the government is totally reversed—until, by common consent of the general voice of all men, I can with truth tell Parliament, France is no longer terrible for her contempt of the rights of every other nation—she no longer avows schemes of universal empire—she has settled into a state whose government can maintain those relations in their integrity, in which alone civilized communities are to find their security, and from which they are to derive their distinction and their glory—until in the situation of France we have exhibited to us those features of a wise, a just, and a

liberal policy, I cannot treat with her. The time to come to the discussion of a peace can only be the time when you can look with confidence to an honorable issue; to such a peace as shall at once restore to Europe her settled and balanced Constitution of general polity, and to every negotiating power in particular, that weight in the scale of general empire which has ever been found the best guarantee and pledge of local independence and general security. Such are my sentiments. I am not afraid to avow them. I commit them to the thinking part of mankind, and if they have not been poisoned by the stream of French sophistry, and prejudiced by her falsehood, I am sure they will approve of the determination I have avowed for those grave and mature reasons on which I found it. I earnestly pray that all the powers engaged in the contest may think as I do, and particularly the emperor of Russia, which, indeed, I do not doubt; and, therefore, I do contend that with that power it is fit that the House should enter into the engagement recommended in his Majesty's message.

ENGLAND'S SHARE IN THE SLAVE TRADE

FROM A SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT, APRIL 2, 1792

WHY ought the slave trade to be abolished? Because it is incurable injustice! How much stronger, then, is the argument for immediate than gradual abolition! By allowing it to continue even for one hour, do not my right honorable friends weaken—do not they desert their own argument of its injustice? If on the ground of injustice it ought to be abolished at last,

why ought it not now? Why is injustice to be suffered to remain for a single hour? From what I hear without doors, it is evident that there is a general conviction entertained of its being far from just, and from that very conviction of its injustice some men have been led, I fear, to the supposition that the slave trade never could have been permitted to begin, but from some strong and irresistible necessity—a necessity, however, which, if it was fancied to exist at first, I have shown cannot be thought by any man whatever to exist at present. This plea of necessity, thus presumed, and presumed, as I suspect, from the circumstance of injustice itself, has caused a sort of acquiescence in the continuance of this evil. Men have been led to place it in the rank of those necessary evils which are supposed to be the lot of human creatures, and to be permitted to fall upon some countries or individuals, rather than upon others, by that Being whose ways are inscrutable to us, and whose dispensations, it is conceived, we ought not to look into. The origin of evil is, indeed, a subject beyond the reach of the human understanding; and the permission of it by the Supreme Being is a subject into which it belongs not to us to inquire. But where the evil in question is a moral evil which a man can scrutinize, and where that moral evil has its origin with ourselves, let us not imagine that we can clear our consciences by this general, not to say irreligious and impious, way of laying aside the question. If we reflect at all on this subject, we must see that every necessary evil supposes that some other and greater evil would be incurred, were it removed. I therefore desire to ask: What can be that greater evil which can be stated to overbalance the one in question? I know of no evil that ever has existed, nor

can imagine any evil to exist, worse than the tearing of eighty thousand persons annually from their native land, by a combination of the most civilized nations in the most enlightened quarter of the globe—but more especially by that nation which calls herself the most free and the most happy of them all. Even if these miserable beings were proved guilty of every crime before you take them off (of which, however, not a single proof is adduced), ought we to take upon ourselves the office of executioners? And even if we condescend so far, still can we be justified in taking them, unless we have clear proof that they are criminals?

But if we go much further—if we ourselves tempt them to sell their fellow-creatures to us—we may rest assured that they will take care to provide by every method, by kidnapping, by village breaking, by unjust wars, by iniquitous condemnations, by rendering Africa a scene of bloodshed and misery, a supply of victims increasing in proportion to our demand. Can we, then, hesitate in deciding whether the wars in Africa are their wars or ours? It was our arms in the river Cameroon, put into the hands of the trader, that furnished him with the means of pushing his trade; and I have no more doubt that they are British arms, put into the hands of Africans, which promote universal war and desolation, than I can doubt their having done so in that individual instance.

I have shown how great is the enormity of this evil, even on the supposition that we take only convicts and prisoners of war. But take the subject in the other way; take it on the grounds stated by the right honorable gentleman over the way, and how does it stand? Think of

eighty thousand persons carried away out of their country, by we know not what means, for crimes imputed; for light or inconsiderable faults; for debt, perhaps; for the crime of witchcraft; or a thousand other weak and scandalous pretexts! Besides, all the fraud and kidnapping, the villanies and perfidy, by which the slave trade is supplied. Reflect on these eighty thousand persons thus annually taken off! There is something in the horror of it that surpasses all the bounds of imagination. Admitting that there exists in Africa something like to courts of justice, yet what an office of humiliation and meanness is it in us to take upon ourselves to carry into execution the partial, the cruel, iniquitous sentences of such courts, as if we also were strangers to all religion, and to the first principles of justice.

Thus, sir, has the perversion of British commerce carried misery instead of happiness to one whole quarter of the globe. False to the very principles of trade, misguided in our policy, and unmindful of our duty, what astonishing—I had almost said, what irreparable—mischiefs, have we brought upon that continent! How shall we hope to obtain, if it be possible, forgiveness from Heaven for those enormous evils we have committed, if we refuse to make use of those means which the mercy of Providence hath still reserved to us, for wiping away the guilt and shame with which we are now covered. If we refuse even this degree of compensation—if, knowing the miseries we have caused, we refuse even now to put a stop to them, how greatly aggravated will be the guilt of Great Britain! and what a blot will these transactions forever be in the history of this country! Shall we, then, delay to repair these injuries, and to begin rendering jus-

tice to Africa? Shall we not count the days and hours that are suffered to intervene and to delay the accomplishment of such a work? Reflect what an immense object is before you; what an object for a nation to have in view and to have a prospect, under the favor of Providence, of being now permitted to attain! I think the House will agree with me in cherishing the ardent wish to enter without delay upon the measures necessary for these great ends; and I am sure that the immediate abolition of the slave trade is the first, the principal, the most indispensable act of policy, of duty, and of justice, that the Legislature of this country has to take, if it is, indeed, their wish to secure those important objects to which I have alluded, and which we are bound to pursue by the most solemn obligations.

Having now detained the House so long, all that I will further add shall be on that important subject, the civilization of Africa, which I have already shown that I consider as the leading feature in this question. Grieved am I to think that there should be a single person in this country, much more that there should be a single member in the British Parliament, who can look on the present dark, uncultivated, and uncivilized state of that continent as a ground for continuing the slave trade; as a ground, not only for refusing to attempt the improvement of Africa, but even for hindering and intercepting every ray of light which might otherwise break in upon her, as a ground for refusing to her the common chance and the common means with which other nations have been blessed, of emerging from their native barbarism. . . .

I trust we shall no longer continue this commerce to the destruction of every improvement on that wide con-

continent, and shall not consider ourselves as conferring too great a boon in restoring its inhabitants to the rank of human beings. I trust we shall not think ourselves too liberal, if, by abolishing the slave trade, we give them the same common chance of civilization with other parts of the world, and that we shall now allow to Africa the opportunity, the hope, the prospect of attaining to the same blessings which we ourselves, through the favorable dispensations of Divine Providence, have been permitted, at a much more early period, to enjoy. If we listen to the voice of reason and duty, and pursue this night the line of conduct which they prescribe, some of us may live to see a reverse of that picture from which we now turn our eyes with shame and regret. We may live to behold the natives of Africa engaged in the calm occupations of industry, in the pursuits of a just and legitimate commerce. We may behold the beams of science and philosophy breaking in upon their land, which at some happy period in still later times may blaze with full lustre, and, joining their influence to that of pure religion, may illuminate and invigorate the most distant extremities of that immense continent. Then may we hope that even Africa, though last of all the quarters of the globe, shall enjoy at length, in the evening of her days, those blessings which have descended so plentifully upon us in a much earlier period of the world. Then, also, will Europe, participating in her improvement and prosperity, receive an ample recompense for the tardy kindness (if kindness it can be called) of no longer hindering that continent from extricating herself out of the darkness which, in other more fortunate regions, has been so much more speedily dispelled.

*“——Nos que ubi primus equis oriens afflavit anhelis;
Illic sera rubens accendit lumina vesp̄r.”*

Then, sir, may be applied to Africa those words, originally used, indeed, with a different view:

*“His demum exactis—————
Devenère locos lætos, et amœna vireta
Fortunatorum nemorum, sedesque beatas;
Largior hic campos Æther et lumine vestit
Purpureo.”*

It is in this view, sir—it is an atonement for our long and cruel injustice toward Africa, that the measure proposed by my honorable friend most forcibly recommends itself to my mind. The great and happy change to be expected in the state of her inhabitants is, of all the various and important benefits of the abolition, in my estimation, incomparably the most extensive and important.

I shall vote, sir, against the adjournment, and I shall also oppose to the utmost every proposition which in any way may tend either to prevent, or even to postpone for an hour, the total abolition of the slave trade—a measure which, on all the various grounds I have stated, we are bound, by the most pressing and indispensable duty, to adopt.

WILBERFORCE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE was born at Hull in 1759. He was descended from a Yorkshire family which had possessed the manor of Wilberfoss in the East Riding from the time of Henry II. to the middle of the eighteenth century. In his twelfth year he was placed at the endowed school of Pocklington, and in 1776 entered St. John's College, Cambridge. In 1780 he became a member of the House of Commons, and three years later was of great service to William Pitt in the latter's struggle against the majority of the House. About 1787 he made the acquaintance of Thomas Clarkson, and began an agitation against the slave trade. In April, 1792, he carried a motion for the gradual suppression of the traffic by 238 to 85 votes, but, owing to the opposition of the House of Peers, the abolition of the slave trade was not accomplished until 1807. When the Society for the Abolition of Slavery in the British Possessions was formed in 1823, Wilberforce became a Vice-President, but he retired from Parliament in 1825, and died in 1833, just before the Emancipation Bill was passed.

HORRORS OF THE BRITISH SLAVE TRADE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

SPEECH DELIVERED IN PARLIAMENT, MAY 12, 1789

IN OPENING, concerning the nature of the slave trade,
I need only observe that it is found by experience to
be just such as every man who uses his reason would
infallibly conclude it to be. For my own part, so clearly
am I convinced of the mischiefs inseparable from it, that
I should hardly want any further evidence than my own
mind would furnish, by the most simple deductions.
Facts, however, are now laid before the House. A re-
port has been made by his Majesty's Privy Council, which,

(95)

I trust, every gentleman has read, and which ascertains the slave trade to be just such in practice as we know, from theory, it must be. What should we suppose must naturally be the consequence of our carrying on a slave trade with Africa? With a country vast in its extent, not utterly barbarous, but civilized in a very small degree? Does any one suppose a slave trade would help their civilization? Is it not plain that she must suffer from it? That civilization must be checked; that her barbarous manners must be made more barbarous; and that the happiness of her millions of inhabitants must be prejudiced with her intercourse with Britain? Does not every one see that a slave trade carried on around her coasts must carry violence and desolation to her very centre? That in a continent just emerging from barbarism, if a trade in men is established, if her men are all converted into goods, and become commodities that can be bartered, it follows they must be subject to ravage just as goods are; and this, too, at a period of civilization, when there is no protecting legislature to defend this their only sort of property, in the same manner as the rights of property are maintained by the legislature of every civilized country. We see then, in the nature of things, how easily the practices of Africa are to be accounted for. Her kings are never compelled to war, that we can hear of, by public principles, by national glory, still less by the love of their people. In Europe it is the extension of commerce, the maintenance of national honor, or some great public object, that is ever the motive to war with every monarch; but, in Africa, it is the personal avarice and sensuality of their kings; these two vices of avarice and sensuality, the most powerful and predominant in natures thus corrupt, we tempt,

we stimulate in all these African princes, and we depend upon these vices for the very maintenance of the slave trade. Does the king of Barbessin want brandy? he has only to send his troops, in the night-time, to burn and desolate a village; the captives will serve as commodities, that may be bartered with the British trader. What a striking view of the wretched state of Africa does the tragedy of Calabar furnish! Two towns, formerly hostile, had settled their differences, and by an intermarriage among their chiefs, had each pledged themselves to peace; but the trade in slaves was prejudiced by such pacifications, and it became, therefore, the policy of our traders to renew the hostilities. This, their policy, was soon put in practice, and the scene of carnage which followed was such, that it is better, perhaps, to refer gentlemen to the Privy Council's report than to agitate their minds by dwelling on it.

The slave trade, in its very nature, is the source of such kind of tragedies; nor has there been a single person, almost, before the Privy Council, who does not add something by his testimony to the mass of evidence upon this point. Some, indeed, of these gentlemen, and particularly the delegates from Liverpool, have endeavored to reason down this plain principle: some have palliated it; but there is not one, I believe, who does not more or less admit it. Some, nay most, I believe, have admitted the slave trade to be the chief cause of wars in Africa. . . .

Having now disposed of the first part of this subject, I must speak of the transit of the slaves to the West Indies. This, I confess, in my own opinion, is the most wretched part of the whole subject. So much misery condensed in so little room is more than the human imagina-

tion had ever before conceived. I will not accuse the Liverpool merchants; I will allow them, nay, I will believe them, to be men of humanity; and I will therefore believe, if it were not for the multitude of these wretched objects, if it were not for the enormous magnitude and extent of the evil which distracts their attention from individual cases, and makes them think generally, and therefore less feelingly on the subject, they never would have persisted in the trade. I verily believe, therefore, if the wretchedness of any one of the many hundred negroes stowed in each ship could be brought before their view, and remain within the sight of the African merchant, that there is no one among them whose heart would bear it. Let any one imagine to himself six or seven hundred of these wretches chained two and two, surrounded with every object that is nauseous and disgusting, diseased, and struggling under every kind of wretchedness! How can we bear to think of such a scene as this? One would think it had been determined to heap on them all the varieties of bodily pain, for the purpose of blunting the feelings of the mind; and yet, in this very point (to show the power of human prejudice), the situation of the slaves has been described by Mr. Norris, one of the Liverpool delegates, in a manner which I am sure will convince the House how interest can draw a film over the eyes, so thick that total blindness could do no more; and how it is our duty therefore to trust not to the reasonings of interested men, or to their way of coloring a transaction.

"Their apartments," says Mr. Norris, "are fitted up as much for their advantage as circumstances will admit. The right ankle of one, indeed, is connected with the left ankle of another by a small iron fetter, and if they are

turbulent, by another on their wrists. They have several meals a day; some of their own country provisions, with the best sauces of African cookery; and by the way of variety, another meal of pulse, etc., according to European taste. After breakfast they have water to wash themselves, while their apartments are perfumed with frankincense and lime juice. Before dinner they are amused after the manner of their country. The song and the dance are promoted," and, as if the whole were really a scene of pleasure and dissipation, it is added that games of chance are furnished. "The men play and sing, while the women and girls make fanciful ornaments with beads, which they are plentifully supplied with." Such is the sort of strain in which the Liverpool delegates, and particularly Mr. Norris, gave evidence before the Privy Council. What will the House think when, by the concurring testimony of other witnesses, the true history is laid open? The slaves, who are sometimes described as rejoicing at their captivity, are so wrung with misery at leaving their country, that it is the constant practice to set sail in the night, lest they should be sensible of their departure. The pulse which Mr. Norris talks of are horse beans; and the scantiness of both water and provision was suggested by the very legislature of Jamaica, in the report of their committee, to be a subject that called for the interference of Parliament.

Mr. Norris talks of frankincense and lime juice; when the surgeons tell you the slaves are stored so close that there is not room to tread among them; and when you have it in evidence from Sir George Younge, that even in a ship which wanted two hundred of her complement, the stench was intolerable. The song and the dance are

promoted, says Mr. Norris. It had been more fair, perhaps, if he had explained that word "promoted." The truth is, that for the sake of exercise, these miserable wretches, loaded with chains, oppressed with disease and wretchedness, are forced to dance by the terror of the lash, and sometimes by the actual use of it. "I," says one of the other evidences, "was employed to dance the men, while another person danced the women." Such, then, is the meaning of the word "promoted"; and it may be observed too, with respect to food, that an instrument is sometimes carried out, in order to force them to eat, which is the same sort of proof how much they enjoy themselves in that instance also. As to their singing, what shall we say when we are told that their songs are songs of lamentation upon their departure which, while they sing, are always in tears, insomuch that one captain (more humane as I should conceive him, therefore, than the rest) threatened one of the women with a flogging, because the mournfulness of her song was too painful for his feelings. In order, however, not to trust too much to any sort of description, I will call the attention of the House to one species of evidence, which is absolutely infallible. Death, at least, is a sure ground of evidence, and the proportion of deaths will not only confirm, but, if possible, will even aggravate our suspicion of their misery in the transit. It will be found, upon an average of all ships of which evidence has been given at the Privy Council, that exclusive of those who perish before they sail, not less than twelve and one-half per cent perish in the passage. Besides these, the Jamaica report tells you that not less than four and one-half per cent die on shore before the day of sale, which is only a week

or two from the time of landing. One-third more die in the seasoning, and this in a country exactly like their own, where they are healthy and happy, as some of the evidences would pretend. The diseases, however, which they contract on shipboard, the astringent washes which are to hide their wounds, and the mischievous tricks used to make them up for sale, are, as the Jamaica report says—a most precious and valuable report, which I shall often have to advert to—one principal cause of this mortality. Upon the whole, however, here is a mortality of about fifty per cent, and this among negroes who are not bought unless quite healthy at first, and unless (as the phrase is with cattle) they are sound in wind and limb. How then can the House refuse its belief to the multiplied testimonies, before the Privy Council, of the savage treatment of the negroes in the Middle Passage? Nay, indeed, what need is there of any evidence? The number of deaths speaks for itself, and makes all such inquiry superfluous. As soon as ever I had arrived thus far in my investigation of the slave trade, I confess to you, sir, so enormous, so dreadful, so irremediable did its wickedness appear, that my own mind was completely made up for the abolition. A trade founded in iniquity, and carried on as this was, must be abolished, let the policy be what it might—let the consequences be what they would, I from this time determined that I would never rest till I had effected its abolition. . . .

When we consider the vastness of the continent of Africa; when we reflect how all other countries have for some centuries past been advancing in happiness and civilization; when we think how in this same period all improvement in Africa has been defeated by her inter-

course with Britain; when we reflect that it is we ourselves that have degraded them to that wretched brutishness and barbarity which we now plead as the justification of our guilt; how the slave trade has enslaved their minds, blackened their character, and sunk them so low in the scale of animal beings that some think the apes are of a higher class, and fancy the orang-outang has given them the go by. What a mortification must we feel at having so long neglected to think of our guilt, or attempt any reparation! It seems, indeed, as if we had determined to forbear from all interference until the measure of our folly and wickedness was so full and complete; until the impolicy which eventually belongs to vice was become so plain and glaring that not an individual in the country should refuse to join in the abolition; it seems as if we had waited until the persons most interested should be tired out with the folly and nefariousness of the trade, and should unite in petitioning against it.

Let us then make such amends as we can for the mischiefs we have done to the unhappy continent; let us recollect what Europe itself was no longer ago than three or four centuries. What if I should be able to show this House that in a civilized part of Europe, in the time of our Henry VII., there were people who actually sold their own children? What if I should tell them that England itself was that country? What if I should point out to them that the very place where this inhuman traffic was carried on was the city of Bristol? Ireland at that time used to drive a considerable trade in slaves with these neighboring barbarians; but a great plague having infested the country, the Irish were struck with a panic, suspected (I am sure very properly) that the plague was

a punishment sent from heaven for the sin of the slave trade, and therefore abolished it. All I ask, therefore, of the people of Bristol is, that they would become as civilized now as Irishmen were four hundred years ago. Let us put an end at once to this inhuman traffic—let us stop this effusion of human blood. The true way to virtue is by withdrawing from temptation; let us then withdraw from these wretched Africans those temptations to fraud, violence, cruelty, and injustice, which the slave trade furnishes. Wherever the sun shines, let us go round the world with him, diffusing our beneficence; but let us not traffic, only that we may set kings against their subjects, subjects against their kings, sowing discord in every village, fear and terror in every family, setting millions of our fellow-creatures a-hunting each other for slaves, creating fairs and markets for human flesh through one whole continent of the world, and, under the name of policy, concealing from ourselves all the baseness and iniquity of such a traffic. Why may we not hope, ere long, to see Hanse towns established on the coast of Africa as they were on the Baltic? It is said the Africans are idle, but they are not too idle, at least, to catch one another; seven hundred to one thousand tons of rice are annually bought of them; by the same rule why should we not buy more? At Gambia one thousand of them are seen continually at work; why should not some more thousands be set to work in the same manner? It is the slave trade that causes their idleness and every other mischief. We are told by one witness: "They sell one another as they can"; and while they can get brandy by catching one another, no wonder they are too idle for any regular work.

I have one word more to add upon a most material

point; but it is a point so self-evident that I shall be extremely short. It will appear from everything which I have said, that it is not regulation, it is not mere palliatives, that can cure this enormous evil. Total abolition is the only possible cure for it. The Jamaica report, indeed, admits much of the evil, but recommends it to us so to regulate the trade that no persons should be kidnapped or made slaves contrary to the custom of Africa. But may they not be made slaves unjustly, and yet by no means contrary to the custom of Africa? I have shown they may; for all the customs of Africa are rendered savage and unjust through the influence of this trade; besides, how can we discriminate between the slaves justly and unjustly made? or, if we could, does any man believe that the British captains can, by any regulation in this country, be prevailed upon to refuse all such slaves as have not been fairly, honestly, and uprightly enslaved? But granting even that they should do this, yet how would the rejected slaves be recompensed? They are brought, as we are told, from three or four thousand miles off, and exchanged like cattle from one hand to another, until they reach the coast. We see then that it is the existence of the slave trade that is the spring of all this internal traffic, and that the remedy cannot be applied without abolition. Again, as to the Middle Passage, the evil is radical there also; the merchant's profit depends upon the number that can be crowded together, and upon the shortness of their allowance. Astringents, escarotics, and all the other arts of making them up for sale, are of the very essence of the trade; these arts will be concealed both from the purchaser and the legislature; they are necessary to the owner's profit, and they will be practiced. Again, chains and arbitrary

treatment must be used in transporting them; our seamen must be taught to play the tyrant, and that depravation of manners among them (which some very judicious persons have treated of as the very worst part of the business) cannot be hindered, while the trade itself continues. As to the slave merchants, they have already told you that if two slaves to a ton are not permitted, the trade cannot continue; so that the objections are done away by themselves on this quarter; and in the West Indies, I have shown that the abolition is the only possible stimulus whereby a regard to population, and consequently to the happiness of the negroes, can be effectually excited in those islands.

I trust, therefore, I have shown that upon every ground the total abolition ought to take place. I have urged many things which are not my own leading motives for proposing it, since I have wished to show every description of gentlemen, and particularly the West India planters, who deserve every attention, that the abolition is politic upon their own principles also. Policy, however, sir, is not my principle, and I am not ashamed to say it. There is a principle above everything that is political; and when I reflect on the command which says: "Thou shalt do no murder," believing the authority to be Divine, how can I dare to set up any reasonings of my own against it? And, sir, when we think of eternity, and of the future consequences of all human conduct, what is there in this life that should make any man contradict the dictates of his conscience, the principles of justice, the laws of religion, and of God. Sir, the nature and all the circumstances of this trade are now laid open to us; we can no longer plead ignorance, we cannot evade it, it is now an object

placed before us, we cannot pass it; we may spurn it, we may kick it out of our way, but we cannot turn aside so as to avoid seeing it; for it is brought now so directly before our eyes that this House must decide, and must justify to all the world, and to their own consciences, the rectitude of the grounds and principles of their decision. A society has been established for the abolition of this trade, in which Dissenters, Quakers, Churchmen—in which the most conscientious of all persuasions have all united, and made a common cause in this great question. Let not Parliament be the only body that is insensible to the principles of national justice. Let us make reparation to Africa, so far as we can, by establishing a trade upon true commercial principles, and we shall soon find the rectitude of our conduct rewarded by the benefits of a regular and a growing commerce.

O'CONNELL

DANIEL O'CONNELL, whom John Randolph of Roanoke called the first orator of Europe, and who, according to Disraeli, had the finest voice ever heard in Parliament, was born in 1775 near Cahirciveen, a small town in Kerry, Ireland. He acquired the rudiments of an education at a school in Cork, after which he became a student in the colleges of St. Omer and Douai. In 1798 he was called to the Irish bar, and although, as a Catholic, he was subjected to caste prejudice and many disabilities, he soon rose to the highest eminence among contemporary advocates. He formed the bold design of organizing the whole of Catholic Ireland on behalf of Catholic emancipation, and, after many years of conflict, he compelled in 1829 a British Government, avowedly hostile, to grant the claims of his co-religionists. He then organized the movement for the repeal of the Act of Union, but this project miscarried, and he died at Genoa in 1847, profoundly afflicted by the failure of his high hopes and by the misery which his country was then suffering from famine. O'Connell's oratorical style was marked by a peculiar subtlety and virile power, and produced great and striking effects. He had an unsurpassed command of a popular audience, and in the art of winning over juries he had scarcely an equal in the law courts.

IRELAND WORTH DYING FOR

DELIVERED AT MULLAGHMAST IN FAVOR OF ANNULING THE UNION
WITH ENGLAND, SEPTEMBER 1843

I ACCEPT with the greatest alacrity the high honor you have done me in calling me to the chair of this majestic meeting. I feel more honored than I ever did in my life, with one single exception, and that related to, if possible, an equally majestic meeting at Tara. But I must say that if a comparison were instituted between them, it would take a more discriminating eye than mine to discover any difference between them. There are the

same incalculable numbers; there is the same firmness; there is the same determination; there is the same exhibition of love to old Ireland; there is the same resolution not to violate the peace; not to be guilty of the slightest outrage; not to give the enemy power by committing a crime, but peacefully and manfully to stand together in the open day, to protest before man and in the presence of God against the iniquity of continuing the Union.

At Tara, I protested against the Union—I repeat the protest at Mullaghmast. I declare solemnly my thorough conviction as a constitutional lawyer, that the Union is totally void in point of principle and of constitutional force. I tell you that no portion of the empire had the power to traffic on the rights and liberties of the Irish people. The Irish people nominated them to make laws, and not legislatures. They were appointed to act under the Constitution, and not annihilate it. Their delegation from the people was confined within the limits of the Constitution, and the moment the Irish Parliament went beyond those limits and destroyed the Constitution, that moment it annihilated its own power, but could not annihilate the immortal spirit of liberty, which belongs, as a rightful inheritance, to the people of Ireland. Take it then from me that the Union is void. I admit there is the force of a law, because it has been supported by the policeman's truncheon, by the soldier's bayonet, and by the horseman's sword; because it is supported by the courts of law and those who have power to adjudicate in them; but I say solemnly, it is not supported by constitutional right. The Union, therefore, in my thorough conviction, is totally void, and I avail myself of this opportunity to announce to several hundreds of thousands of my fellow-

subjects that the Union is an unconstitutional law and that it is not fated to last long—its hour is approaching. America offered us her sympathy and support. We refused the support, but we accepted the sympathy; and while we accepted the sympathy of the Americans, we stood upon the firm ground of the right of every human being to liberty; and I, in the name of the Irish nation, declare that no support obtained from America should be purchased by the price of abandoning principle for one moment, and that principle is that every human being is entitled to freedom.

My friends, I want nothing for the Irish but their country, and I think the Irish are competent to obtain their own country for themselves. I like to have the sympathy of every good man everywhere, but I want not armed support or physical strength from any country. The Republican party in France offered me assistance. I thanked them for their sympathy, but I distinctly refused to accept any support from them. I want support from neither France nor America, and if that usurper, Louis Philippe, who trampled on the liberties of his own gallant nation, thought fit to assail me in his newspaper, I returned the taunt with double vigor, and I denounce him to Europe and the world as a treacherous tyrant, who has violated the compact with his own country, and therefore is not fit to assist the liberties of any other country. I want not the support of France; I want not the support of America; I have physical support enough about me to achieve any change; but you know well that it is not my plan—I will not risk the safety of one of you. I could not afford the loss of one of you—I will protect you all, and it is better for you all to be merry and alive, to enjoy

the repeal of the Union; but there is not a man of you there that would not, if we were attacked unjustly and illegally, be ready to stand in the open field by my side. Let every man that concurs in that sentiment lift up his hand.

[All hands were lifted]

The assertion of that sentiment is our sure protection, for no person will attack us, and we will attack nobody. Indeed, it would be the height of absurdity for us to think of making any attack; for there is not one man in his senses in Europe or America that does not admit that the repeal of the Union is now inevitable. The English papers taunted us, and their writers laughed us to scorn; but now they admit that it is impossible to resist the application for repeal. More power to you. But that even shows we have power enough to know how to use it. Why, it is only this week that one of the leading London newspapers, called the "Morning Herald," which had a reporter at the Lismore meeting, published an account of that great and mighty meeting, and in that account the writer expressly says that it will be impossible to refuse so peaceable, so determined, so unanimous a people as the people of Ireland the restoration of their domestic legislature. For my own part, I would have thought it wholly unnecessary to call together so large a meeting as this, but for the trick played by Wellington, and Peel, and Graham, and Stanley, and the rest of the paltry administration, by whose government this country is disgraced. I don't suppose so worthless an administration ever before got together. Lord Stanley is a renegade from Whiggism, and Sir James Graham is worse. Sir Robert Peel has five hundred colors

on his bad standard, and not one of them is permanent. To-day it is orange, to-morrow it will be green, the day after neither one nor the other, but we shall take care that it shall never be dyed in blood.

Then there is the poor old Duke of Wellington, and nothing was ever so absurd as their deification of him in England. The English historian—rather the Scotch one—Alison, an arrant Tory, admits that the Duke of Wellington was surprised at Waterloo, and if he got victoriously out of that battle, it was owing to the valor of the British troops and their unconquerable determination to die, but not to yield. No man is ever a good soldier but the man who goes into the battle determined to conquer or not come back from the battlefield. No other principle makes a good soldier; conquer or die is the battle-cry for the good soldier; conquer or die is his only security. The Duke of Wellington had troops at Waterloo that had learned that word, and there were Irish troops among them. You all remember the verses made by poor Shan Van Vocht:

“At famed Waterloo
Duke Wellington would look blue
If Paddy was not there too,
Says the Shan Van Vocht.”

Yes, the glory he got there was bought by the blood of the English, Irish, and Scotch soldiers—the glory was yours. He is nominally a member of the administration, but yet they would not intrust him with any kind of office. He has no duty at all to perform, but a sort of Irish anti-repeal warden. I thought I never would be obliged to the Ministry, but I am obliged to them. They put a speech abusing the Irish into the Queen's mouth. They accused us of disaffection, but they lied; it is their

speech; there is no disaffection in Ireland. We were loyal to the sovereigns of Great Britain, even when they were our enemies; we were loyal to George III. even when he betrayed us; we were loyal to George IV. when he blubbered and cried when we forced him to emancipate us; we were loyal to old Billy, though his Minister put into his mouth a base, bloody, and intolerant speech against Ireland; and we are loyal to the Queen, no matter what our enemies may say to the contrary. It is not the Queen's speech, and I pronounce it to be a lie. There is no dissatisfaction in Ireland, but there is this—a full determination to obtain justice and liberty. I am much obliged to the Ministry for that speech, for it gives me, among other things, an opportunity of addressing such meetings as this. I had held the monster meetings. I had fully demonstrated the opinion of Ireland. I was convinced their unanimous determination to obtain liberty was sufficiently signified by the many meetings already held; but when the Minister's speech came out, it was necessary to do something more. Accordingly, I called a monster meeting at Loughrea. I called another meeting in Clifden. I had another monster meeting in Lismore, and here now we are assembled on the Rath of Mullaghmast.

At Mullaghmast (and I have chosen this for this obvious reason), we are on the precise spot where English treachery—ay, and false Irish treachery, too—consummated a massacre that has never been imitated, save in the massacre of the Mamelukes by Mehemet Ali. It was necessary to have Turks atrocious enough to commit a crime equal to that perpetrated by Englishmen. But do not think that the massacre of Mullaghmast was a question between Protestants and Catholics—it was no such

thing. The murdered persons were to be sure Catholics, but a great number of the murderers were also Catholic and Irishmen, because there were then, as well as now, many Catholics who were traitors to Ireland. But we have now this advantage, that we may have many honest Protestants joining us—joining us heartily in hand and heart, for old Ireland and liberty. I thought this a fit and becoming spot to celebrate, in the open day, our unanimity in declaring our determination not to be misled by any treachery. Oh, my friends, I will keep you clear of all treachery—there shall be no bargain, no compromise with England—we shall take nothing but repeal, and a Parliament in College Green. You will never, by my advice, confide in any false hopes they hold out to you; never confide in anything coming from them, or cease from your struggle, no matter what promise may be held to you, until you hear me say I am satisfied; and I will tell you where I will say that—near the statue of King William, in College Green. No; we came here to express our determination to die to a man, if necessary, in the cause of old Ireland. We came to take advice of each other, and, above all, I believe you came here to take my advice. I can tell you, I have the game in my hand—I have the triumph secure—I have the repeal certain, if you but obey my advice.

I will go slow—you must allow me to do so—but you will go sure. No man shall find himself imprisoned or persecuted who follows my advice. I have led you thus far in safety; I have swelled the multitude of repealers until they are identified with the entire population, or nearly the entire population, of the land, for seven-eighths of the Irish people are now enrolling themselves repeal-

ers. [Cheers and cries of "More power to you."] I don't want more power; I have power enough; and all I ask of you is to allow me to use it. I will go on quietly and slowly, but I will go on firmly, and with a certainty of success. I am now arranging a plan for the formation of the Irish House of Commons.

It is a theory, but it is a theory that may be realized in three weeks. The repeal arbitrators are beginning to act; the people are submitting their differences to men chosen by themselves. You will see by the newspapers that Doctor Gray and my son, and other gentlemen, have already held a petty session of their own, where justice will be administered free of all expense to the people. The people shall have chosen magistrates of their own in the room of the magistrates who have been removed. The people shall submit their differences to them, and shall have strict justice administered to them that shall not cost them a single farthing. I shall go on with that plan until we have all disputes settled and decided by justices appointed by the people themselves. ["Long may you live!"] I wish to live long enough to have perfect justice administered to Ireland, and liberty proclaimed throughout the land. It will take me some time to prepare my plan for the formation of the new Irish House of Commons—that plan which we will yet submit to her Majesty for her approval when she gets rid of her present paltry administration and has one that I can support. But I must finish that job before I go forth, and one of my reasons for calling you together is to state my intentions to you. Before I arrange my plan, the Conciliation Hall will be finished, and it will be worth any man's while to go from Mullaghmast to Dublin to see it.

When we have it arranged I will call together three hundred, as the "Times" called them, "bogtrotters," but better men never stepped on pavement. But I will have the three hundred, and no thanks to them. Wales is up at present, almost in a state of insurrection. The people there have found that the landlords' power is too great, and has been used tyrannically, and I believe you agree with them tolerably well in that. They insist on the sacredness of the right of the tenants to security of possession, and with the equity of tenure which I would establish we will do the landlords full justice, but we will do the people justice also. We will recollect that the land is the landlord's, and let him have the benefit of it, but we will also recollect that the labor belongs to the tenant, and the tenant must have the value of his labor, not transitory and by the day, but permanently and by the year. Yes, my friends, for this purpose I must get some time. I worked the present repeal year tolerably well. I believe no one in January last would believe that we could have such a meeting within the year as the Tara demonstration. You may be sure of this—and I say it in the presence of Him who will judge me—that I never will wilfully deceive you. I have but one wish under Heaven, and that is for the liberty and prosperity of Ireland. I am for leaving England to the English, Scotland to the Scotch, but we must have Ireland for the Irish. I will not be content until I see not a single man in any office, from the lowest constable to the Lord Chancellor, but Irishmen. This is our land, and we must have it. We will be obedient to the Queen, joined to England by the golden link of the Crown, but we must have our own Parliament, our own bench, our own magistrates, and we

will give some of the *shoneens* who now occupy the bench leave to retire, such as those lately appointed by Sugden. He is a pretty boy, sent here from England; but I ask: Did you ever hear such a name as he has got? I remember, in Wexford, a man told me he had a pig at home which he was so fond of that he would call it Sugden. No; we shall get judicial independence for Ireland. It is for this purpose we are assembled here to-day, as every countenance I see around me testifies. If there is any one here who is for the Union, let him say so. Is there anybody here for the repeal? [Cries of "All, all!"]

Yes, my friends, the Union was begot in iniquity—it was perpetuated in fraud and cruelty. It was no compact, no bargain, but it was an act of the most decided tyranny and corruption that was ever yet perpetrated. Trial by jury was suspended—the right of personal protection was at an end—courts-martial sat throughout the land—and the county of Kildare, among others, flowed with blood. Oh, my friends, listen now to the man of peace, who will never expose you to the power of your enemies. In 1798 there were some brave men, some valiant men, to head the people at large; but there were many traitors, who left the people in the power of their enemies. The Curragh of Kildare afforded an instance of the fate which Irishmen were to expect, who confided in their Saxon enemies. Oh, it was an ill-organized, a premature, a foolish, and an absurd insurrection; but you have a leader now who never will allow you to commit any act so foolish or so destructive. How delighted do I feel with the thorough conviction which has come over the minds of the people, that they could not gratify your enemies more than by committing a crime. No; our an-

cestors suffered for confiding in the English, but we never will confide in them. They suffered for being divided among themselves. There is no division among us. They suffered for their own dissensions—for not standing man to man by each other's side. We shall stand peaceably side by side in the face of every enemy. Oh, how delighted was I in the scenes which I witnessed as I came along here to-day! How my heart throbbed, how my spirit was elevated, how my bosom swelled with delight at the multitude which I beheld, and which I shall behold, of the stalwart and strong men of Kildare! I was delighted at the activity and force that I saw around me, and my old heart grew warm again in admiring the beauty of the dark-eyed maids and matrons of Kildare. Oh, there is a starlight sparkling from the eye of a Kildare beauty, that is scarcely equalled, and could not be excelled, all over the world. And remember that you are the sons, the fathers, the brothers, and the husbands of such women, and a traitor or a coward could never be connected with any of them. Yes, I am in a county, remarkable in the history of Ireland for its bravery and its misfortune, for its credulity in the faith of others, for its people judged of the Saxon by the honesty and honor of their own natures. I am in a county celebrated for the sacredness of its shrines and fanes. I am in a county where the lamp of Kildare's holy shrine burned with its sacred fire, through ages of darkness and storm—that fire which for six centuries burned before the high altar without being extinguished, being fed continuously, without the slightest interruption, and it seemed to me to have been not an inapt representation of the continuous fidelity and religious love of country of the men of Kildare. Yes, you

have those high qualities—religious fidelity, continuous love of country. Even your enemies admit that the world has never produced any people that exceeded the Irish in activity and strength. The Scottish philosopher has declared, and the French philosopher has confirmed it, that number one in the human race is, blessed be Heaven, the Irishman. In moral virtue, in religion, in perseverance, and in glorious temperance, you excel. Have I any teetotalers here? Yes, it is teetotalism that is repealing the Union. I could not afford to bring you together, I would not dare to bring you together, but that I had the teetotalers for my police.

Yes, among the nations of the earth, Ireland stands number one in the physical strength of her sons and in the beauty and purity of her daughters. Ireland, land of my forefathers, how my mind expands, and my spirit walks abroad in something of majesty, when I contemplate the high qualities, inestimable virtues, and true purity and piety and religious fidelity of the inhabitants of your green fields and productive mountains. Oh, what a scene surrounds us! It is not only the countless thousands of brave and active and peaceable and religious men that are here assembled, but Nature herself has written her character with the finest beauty in the verdant plains that surround us. Let any man run round the horizon with his eye, and tell me if created nature ever produced anything so green and so lovely, so undulating, so teeming with production. The richest harvests that any land can produce are those reaped in Ireland; and then here are the sweetest meadows, the greenest fields, the loftiest mountains, the purest streams, the noblest rivers, the most capacious harbors—and her water power is equal to turn the machinery of the

whole world. Oh, my friends, it is a country worth fighting for—it is a country worth dying for; but, above all, it is a country worth being tranquil, determined, submissive, and docile for; disciplined as you are in obedience to those who are breaking the way, and trampling down the barriers between you and your constitutional liberty, I will see every man of you having a vote, and every man protected by the ballot from the agent or landlord. I will see labor protected, and every title to possession recognized, when you are industrious and honest. I will see prosperity again throughout your land—the busy hum of the shuttle and the tinkling of the smithy shall be heard again. We shall see the nailer employed even until the middle of the night, and the carpenter covering himself with his chips. I will see prosperity in all its gradations spreading through a happy, contented, religious land. I will hear the hymn of a happy people go forth at sunrise to God in praise of his mercies—and I will see the evening sun set down among the uplifted hands of a religious and free population. Every blessing that man can bestow and religion can confer upon the faithful heart shall spread throughout the land. Stand by me—join with me—I will say be obedient to me, and Ireland shall be free.

DEMANDING JUSTICE

SPEECH DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, FEBRUARY 4, 1836

IT APPEARS to me impossible to suppose that the House will consider me presumptuous in wishing to be heard for a short time on this question, especially after the distinct manner in which I have been alluded to in the course of the debate. If I had no other excuse, that would be sufficient; but I do not want it; I have another and a better—the question is one in the highest degree interesting to the people of Ireland. It is, whether we mean to do justice to that country—whether we mean to continue the injustice which has been already done to it, or to hold out the hope that it will be treated in the same manner as England and Scotland. That is the question. We know what “lip service” is; we do not want that. There are some men who will even declare that they are willing to refuse justice to Ireland; while there are others who, though they are ashamed to say so, are ready to consummate the iniquity, and they do so.

England never did do justice to Ireland—she never did. What we have got of it, we have extorted from men opposed to us on principle—against which principle they have made us such concessions as we have obtained from them. The right honorable baronet opposite [Sir Robert Peel] says he does not distinctly understand what is meant by a principle. I believe him. He advocated religious exclusion on religious motives: he yielded that point at length, when we were strong enough to make it prudent for him to do so.

Here am I calling for justice to Ireland; but there is a coalition to-night—not a base unprincipled one—God forbid!—it is an extremely natural one; I mean that between the right honorable baronet and the noble lord the member for North Lancashire [Lord Stanley]. It is a natural coalition—and it is impromptu; for the noble lord informs us he had not even a notion of taking the part he has, until the moment at which he seated himself where he now is. I know his candor: he told us it was a sudden inspiration which induced him to take part against Ireland. I believe it with the most potent faith, because I know that he requires no preparation for voting against the interests of the Irish people. [Groans.] I thank you for that groan—it is just of a piece with the rest. I regret much that I have been thrown upon arguing this particular question, because I should have liked to have dwelt upon the speech which has been so graciously delivered from the throne to-day—to have gone into its details, and to have pointed out the many great and beneficial alterations and amendments in our existing institutions which it hints at and recommends to the House. The speech of last year was full of reforms in words, and in words only; but this speech contains the great leading features of all the salutary reforms the country wants; and if they are worked out fairly and honestly in detail, I am convinced the country will require no further amelioration of its institutions, and that it will become the envy and admiration of the world. I, therefore, hail the speech with great satisfaction.

It has been observed that the object of a king's speech is to say as little in as many words as possible; but this speech contains more things than words—it contains those great principles which, adopted in practice, will be most

salutary, not only to the British Empire, but to the world. When speaking of our foreign policy, it rejoices in the co-operation between France and this country; but it abstains from conveying any ministerial approbation of alterations in the domestic laws of that country which aim at the suppression of public liberty, and the checking of public discussion, such as call for individual reprobation, and which I reprobate as much as any one. I should like to know whether there is a statesman in the country who will get up in this House and avow his approval of such proceedings on the part of the French Government. I know it may be done out of the House amid the cheers of an assembly of friends; but the government have, in my opinion, wisely abstained from reprobating such measures in the speech, while they have properly exulted in such a union of the two countries as will contribute to the national independence and the public liberty of Europe. . . .

Years are coming over me, but my heart is as young and as ready as ever in the service of my country, of which I glory in being the pensionary and the hired advocate. I stand in a situation in which no man ever stood yet—the faithful friend of my country—its servant—its slave, if you will—I speak its sentiments by turns to you and to itself. I require no £20,000,000 on behalf of Ireland—I ask you only for justice—will you—can you—I will not say dare you refuse, because that would make you turn the other way. I implore you, as English gentlemen, to take this matter into consideration now, because you never had such an opportunity of conciliating. Experience makes fools wise; you are not fools, but you have yet to be convinced. I cannot forget the year 1825. We begged then as we would for a beggar's boon; we



DANIEL O'CONNELL

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must admit. You may taunt the Ministry with having coalesced me, you may raise the vulgar cry of "Irishman and Papist" against me, you may send out men called ministers of God to slander and calumniate me; they may assume whatever garb they please, but the question comes into this narrow compass. I demand, I respectfully insist on equal justice for Ireland, on the same principle by which it has been administered to Scotland and England. I will not take less. Refuse me that if you can.

LORD BROUGHAM

HENRY, FIRST LORD BROUGHAM AND VAUX, was born at Edinburgh in 1778. During the greater portion of a life extended to the term of ninety years he played a conspicuous part in public affairs. From his earliest youth he showed signs of extraordinary talent. When barely seven he was sent to the High School of Edinburgh, where he gained a triumph over his tutor by justifying the use of some Latin words to which exception had been taken. When he was not yet thirteen he left the school as head of the Fifth Form, and entered the University of Edinburgh, where he distinguished himself in the classical curriculum, in mathematics and in the natural sciences. In 1800 he was admitted to the Faculty of Advocates, and in 1808 was called to the English bar. Meanwhile in 1802 he had been one of the founders of the "Edinburgh Review," and in 1803 his scientific reputation was so far established that he was chosen a member of the Royal Society. He entered the House of Commons in 1810, having made a vow that he would not open his mouth for a month. He kept the vow for that month only, but three months later had acquired such a position in the House that he was regarded as a candidate for the leadership of the Liberal Opposition. In 1812 he vehemently attacked the Orders in Council which caused the war between Great Britain and the United States. He remained out of Parliament from 1812 to 1816, but, regaining a seat in the last-named year, he immediately resumed a commanding position. In 1820 he defended Queen Caroline, when a bill was brought into the House of Lords for her deposition and for the dissolution of her marriage. The victory which he gained on this occasion over the Court and the Ministry raised him to the pinnacle of fame. Thenceforward his practice at the bar rose to about £7,000 a year. In 1825 Brougham started the movement which led to the establishment of the University of London, and in 1828 he delivered his great speech on "Law Reform." When the Whigs were at last called upon in 1830 to form a government he was appointed Lord Chancellor, and took his seat upon the woolsack as Baron Brougham and Vaux. Although he had to work hard to master the principles of equity, he proved an able and just judge, and, if few of his decisions are cited as landmarks, still fewer of them have been overruled. To him, in his capacity of politician, was largely due the passage of the first Reform Act. He also took an active part in overthrowing the Peel Cabinet, which succeeded Lord Melbourne's first Ministry, but, when the Whigs returned to power in 1835, the

leaders, with one accord, resolved to exclude Brougham from office. For more than thirty years after his fall he continued to participate in the judicial business and debates of the Upper House, but it might have been better for his fame if he had not so long outlived the days of his glory. He died at Cannes in France in 1868.

AGAINST PITT AND WAR WITH AMERICA

DELIVERED AT LIVERPOOL, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1812

GENTLEMEN, I told you last night when we were near the head of the poll, that I, for one at least, would neither lose heart in the conflict, nor lower my courage in fighting your battles, nor despair of the good cause, although we should be fifty, a hundred, or even two hundred behind our enemies. It has happened this day that we have fallen short of them, not quite by two hundred, but we have lost one hundred and seventy votes. I tell you this with the deepest concern, with feelings of pain and sorrow which I dare not trust myself in attempting to express. But I tell it you without any sensation approaching to despondency. This is the only feeling which I have not now present in my breast. I am overcome with your unutterable affection toward me and my cause. I feel a wonder mingled with gratitude, which no language can even attempt to describe, at your faithful, unwearied, untamable exertions in my behalf of our common object. I am penetrated with an anxiety for its success, if possible more lively than any of yourselves can know who are my followers in this mighty struggle—an anxiety cruelly increased by that which as yet you are ignorant of, though you are this night to hear it. To my distinguished friends who surround me, and connect me more closely with you, I am thankful beyond all expres-

sion. I am lost in admiration of the honest and courageous men among you who have resisted all threats as well as bribes, and persevered in giving me their free unbought voices. For those unhappy persons who have been scared by imminent fear on their own and their children's behalf from obeying the impulse of their conscience, I feel nothing of resentment—nothing but pity and compassion. Of those who have thus opposed us, I think as charitably as a man can think in such circumstances. For this great town (if it is indeed to be defeated in the contest, which I will not venture to suppose), for the country at large whose cause we are upholding—whose fight we are fighting—for the whole manufacturing and trading interests—for all who love peace—all who have no profit in war—I feel moved by the deepest alarm lest our grand attempt may not prosper. All these feelings are in my heart at this moment—they are various, they are conflicting, they are painful, they are burdensome, but they are not overwhelming, and among them all—and I have swept round the whole range of which the human mind is susceptible—there is not one that bears the slightest resemblance to despair. I trust myself once more in your faithful hands; I fling myself again on you for protection; I call aloud to you to bear your own cause in your hearts; I implore of you to come forth in your own defence, for the sake of this vast town and its people, for the salvation of the middle and lower orders, for the whole industrial part of the whole country; I entreat you by your love of peace, by your hatred of oppression, by your weariness of burdensome and useless taxation, by yet another appeal to which those must lend an ear who have been deaf to all the rest; I ask it for your families, for your infants, if you would

avoid such a winter of horrors as the last. It is coming fast upon us; already it is near at hand; yet a few short weeks and we may be in the midst of those unspeakable miseries, the recollection of which now rends your very souls. If there is one freeman among this immense multitude who has not tendered his voice, and if he can be deaf to this appeal, if he can suffer the threats of our antagonists to frighten him away from the recollection of the last dismal winter, that man will not vote for me. But if I have the happiness of addressing one honest man among you, who has a care left for his wife and children, or for other endearing ties of domestic tenderness (and which of us is altogether without them?), that man will lay his hand on his heart when I now bid him to do so, and with those little threats of present spite ringing in his ear, he will rather consult his fears of greater evil by listening to the dictates of his heart, when he casts a look toward the dreadful season through which he lately passed, and will come bravely forward to place those men in Parliament whose whole efforts have been directed toward the restoration of peace and the revival of trade.

Do not, gentlemen, listen to those who tell you the cause of freedom is desperate; they are the enemies of that cause and of you, but listen to me—and I am one who has never yet deceived you—I say, then, that it will be desperate if you make no exertions to retrieve it. I tell you that your language alone can betray it, that it can only be made desperate through your despair. I am not a man to be cast down by temporary reverses, let them come upon me as thick and as swift and as sudden as they may. I am not he who is daunted by majorities in the outset of a struggle for worthy objects—else I should

not now stand here before you to boast of triumphs won in your cause. If your champions had yielded to the force of numbers, of gold, of power—if defeat could have dismayed them, then would the African slave trade never have been abolished, then would the cause of reform, which now bids fair to prevail over its enemies, have been long ago sunk amid the desertions of its friends; then would those prospects of peace have been utterly benighted, which I still devoutly cherish, and which even now brighten in our eyes; then would the Orders in Council which I overthrew by your support, have remained a disgrace to the British name, and an eternal obstacle to our best interests. I no more despond now than I have done in the course of those sacred and glorious contentions, but it is for you to say whether to-morrow shall not make it my duty to despair. To-morrow is your last day; your last efforts must then be made; if you put forth your strength the day is your own; if you desert it, it is lost. To win it, I shall be the first to lead you on and the last to forsake you.

Gentlemen, when I told you a little while ago that there were new and powerful reasons to-day for ardently desiring that our cause might succeed, I did not sport with you; yourselves shall now judge of them. I ask you—Is the trade with America of any importance to this great and thickly peopled town? [Cries of, "Yes, yes!"] Is a continuance of the rupture with America likely to destroy that trade? [Loud cries of, "It is, it is!"] Is there any man who would deeply feel it, if he heard that the rupture was at length converted into open war? Is there a man present who would not be somewhat alarmed if he supposed that we should have another

year without the American trade? Is there any one of nerves so hardy, as calmly to hear that our government has given up all negotiation, abandoned all hopes of speedy peace with America? Then I tell that man to brace up his nerves; I bid you all be prepared to hear what touches you all equally. We are by this day's intelligence at war with America in good earnest; our government has at length issued letters of marque and reprisal against the United States. [Universal cries of, "God help us, God help us!"] Aye, God help us! God of his infinite compassion take pity on us! God help and protect this poor town, and this whole trading country!

Now I ask you whether you will be represented in Parliament by the men who have brought this grievous calamity on your heads, or by those who have constantly opposed the mad career which was plunging us into it? Whether you will trust the revival of your trade—the restoration of your livelihood—to them who have destroyed it, or to me whose counsels, if followed in time, would have averted this unnatural war, and left Liverpool flourishing in opulence and peace? Make your choice, for it lies with yourselves which of us shall be commissioned to bring back commerce and plenty—they whose stubborn infatuation has chased those blessings away, or we, who are only known to you as the strenuous enemies of their miserable policy, the fast friends of your best interests.

Gentlemen, I stand up in this conquest against the friends and followers of Mr. Pitt, or, as they partially designate him, the immortal statesman, now no more. Immortal in the miseries of his devoted country! Immortal in the wounds of her bleeding liberties! Immor-

tal in the cruel wars which sprang from his cold miscalculating ambition! Immortal in the intolerable taxes, the countless loads of debt which these wars have flung upon us—which the youngest man among us will not live to see the end of! Immortal in the triumph of our enemies, and the ruin of our allies, the costly purchase of so much blood and treasure! Immortal in the afflictions of England, and the humiliations of her friends, through the whole results of his twenty years' reign, from the first rays of favor with which a delighted court gilded his early apostasy, to the deadly glare which is at this instant cast upon his name by the burning metropolis of our last ally. But may no such immortality ever fall to my lot; let me rather live innocent and inglorious; and when at last I cease to serve you, and to feel for your wrongs, may I have a humble monument in some nameless stone, to tell that beneath it there rests from his labors in your service "an enemy of the immortal statesman—a friend of peace and of the people."

Friends, you must now judge for yourselves, and act accordingly. Against us and against you stand those who call themselves the successors of that man. They are the heirs of his policy; and if not of his immortality, too, it is only because their talents for the work of destruction are less transcendent than his. They are his surviving colleagues. His fury survives in them, if not his fire; and they partake of all his infatuated principles, if they have lost the genius that first made those principles triumphant. If you choose them for your delegates you know to what policy you lend your sanction—what men you exalt to power. Should you prefer me, your choice falls upon one who, if obscure and unambitious, will at least

give his own age no reason to fear him, or posterity to curse him—one whose proudest ambition it is to be deemed the friend of liberty and of peace.

CLOSING ARGUMENT FOR QUEEN CAROLINE

MY LORDS, I have another remark to make before I leave this case. I have heard it said by some acute sifters of evidence: "Oh! you have damaged the witnesses, but only by proving falsehoods, by proving perjury, indeed, in unimportant particulars." I need but remind your lordships that this is an observation which can only come from the lay part of the community. Any lawyer at once will see how ridiculous, if I may so speak, such an objection must always be. It springs from an entire confusion of ideas, a heedless confounding together of different things. If I am to confirm the testimony of an accomplice—if I am to set up an informer—no doubt my confirmation ought to extend to matters connected with the crime—no doubt it must be an important particular, else it will avail me nothing to prove it by way of confirmation. But it is quite the reverse in respect to pulling down a perjured witness, or a witness suspected of swearing falsely. It is quite enough if he perjure himself in any part to take away all credit from the whole of his testimony. Can it be said that you are to pick and choose; that you are to believe in part and reject the rest as false? You may, indeed, be convinced that a part is true, notwithstanding other parts are false—provided these parts are not falsely and wilfully

sworn to by the witness, but parts which he may have been ignorant of, or may have forgotten, or may have mistaken. In this sense, you may choose—culling the part you believe and separating the part you think contradicted. But if one part is not only not true—is not only not consistent with the fact, but is falsely and wilfully sworn to on his part—if you are satisfied that one part of his story is an invention, to use the plain word, a lie, and that he is a forsworn man—good God! my lords, what safety is there for human kind against the malice of their enemies—what chance of innocence escaping from the toils of the perjured and unprincipled conspirator, if you are to believe part of a tale, even though ten witnesses swear to it, all of whom you convict of lying and perjury in some other part of the story? I only pray your lordships to consider what it is that forms the safeguard of each and every one of you against the arts of the mercenary or the spiteful conspirator. Suppose any one man—and let each of your lordships lay this to his mind before you dismiss the mighty topic—suppose any one of your lordships were to meet with a misfortune, the greatest that can befall a human being, and the greater in proportion as he is of an honorable mind, whose soul is alien even to any idea or glance of suspicion of such a case being possible to himself, whose feelings shudder at the bare thought of his name even being accidentally coupled with a charge at which his nature revolts—suppose that mischance, which has happened to the best and purest of men, which may happen to any of you to-morrow, and which, if it does happen, must succeed against you to-morrow, if you adopt the principle I am struggling against—suppose any one of your lordships charged by a mere mercenary scoun-

drel with the perpetration of a crime at which we show in this country our infinite horror, by almost, and with singular injustice, considering the bare charge to stand in place of proof—suppose this plot laid to defame the fairest reputation in England—I say, that reputation must be saved, if escape it may, only by one means. No perjury can be expected to be exposed in the main, the principal part of the fabric; that can be easily defended from any attack against it; all the arts of the defendant's counsel, and all his experience, will be exhausted in vain: the plotter knows full well (as these conspirators have here done) how to take care that only one person shall swear to a fact—to lay no others present—to choose the time and select the place when contradiction cannot be given, by knowing the time and the place where any one of your lordships, whom he marks for his prey, may have chanced to be alone at any moment of time. Contradiction is not here to be expected—refutation is impossible. Prevarication of the witness upon the principal part of his case, beyond all doubt, by every calculation of chances, there will not be. But you will be defended by counsel; and the court before whom you are tried will assuredly have you acquitted, if the villain, who has immovably told a consistent, firm tale (though not contradicted, though not touched, upon the story itself), tells the least falsehood upon the most unimportant particulars on which your advocate shall examine him. My lords, I ask for the Queen no other justice than this upon which you rely, and must needs rely, for your own escape from the charge of such crimes! I desire she may have no other safety than that which forms the only safety to any of your lordships in such cases, before any court that deserved the name of a

court of justice, where it might be your lot to be dragged and tried!

I am told that the sphere of life in which Bergami, afterward promoted to be the Queen's chamberlain, originally moved, compared with the fortune which has since attended him in her service, is of itself matter of suspicion. I should be sorry, my lords, to have lived to see the day when nothing more was required to ruin any exalted character in this free country than the having shown favor to a meritorious servant, by promoting him above his rank in society, the rank of his birth. It is a lot which has happened to many a great man—which has been that of those who have been the ornaments of their country. God forbid that we should ever see the time when all ranks, all stations in this community, except the highest, were not open to all men, and that we should ever reckon it of itself a circumstance even of suspicion in any person (for neither sex can be exempt from an inference of such a nature if it is once made general and absolute) that he has promoted an inferior to be his equal! Let me, however, remind your lordships, that the rapidity of the promotion of Bergami has been greatly overstated; and the manner in which it took place is a convincing proof that the story of love having been the cause of it is inconsistent with the fact. Now, this I state, from a distinct recollection of the dates in the evidence before you. Believe Majocchi or Demont, and three weeks after Bergami's arrival in the household he was promoted to the Queen's bed. How was it with respect to her board? Because, after that, he continued in the situation of courier; he dined with the servants, and lived not even with the chamberlains; certainly not with those gentlemen, for they

were at her table, as usual. He continued to dine with the servants at Genoa; there, withstanding Majocchi's story, it is proved to your lordships that he did not dine with her Majesty. He continued as courier, even after he had once sat at her Majesty's table by accident, by one of the accidents usual in travelling. It appears even in the evidence (believing it to be true) that the Queen sat at the table where he was for the space of one day. He, however, continued as courier; and it was only on the eve of the long voyage that he was admitted to her table, commencing with the journey to Mount St. Gothard. He continued in his situation as courier, still in livery, until, by degrees, he was promoted, first to travel in a carriage of his own, instead of riding on horseback. Then he was promoted occasionally to sit at the same table with the Queen, and at last he was appointed a chamberlain generally. My lords, this is not consistent with the story told of Naples. Show me the woman, particularly the amorous, the imprudent, the insane woman her Majesty is described to be by those perjured witnesses, who would have allowed her paramour, after indulging in all the gratifications described at Naples, for weeks and months, to continue for months, and almost for years, in an apparent menial capacity! My lords, this is not the rapidity of pace with which love promotes his favorite votaries; it much more resembles the sluggish progress with which merit wends its ways in the world, and in courts. He was a man of merit, as you will hear in evidence—if you put me on calling any. He was not of the low origin he has been described to be. He was a person whose father held the situation of a landed proprietor, though of moderate income, in the north of Italy. He had got into difficulties

as has happened to many of the Italian gentry of late years; and his son, if I mistake not, had sold the family estate in order to pay his father's debts. He was reduced—but he was a reduced gentleman. When he was in the service of General Pino, he was recognized as such. The general repeatedly favored him as such: he has dined at his table, General Pino being the commander-in-chief in the Milanese. He thus sat at the table of an Italian noble in the highest station. He has dined at his table during the Spanish campaigns. He was respected in his station—he was esteemed by those whom he served at that time. They encouraged him, as knowing his former pretensions and his present merits; and when he was hired, he was proposed by a gentleman who desired to befriend and promote him, an Austrian nobleman, then living in Italy, in the Austrian service—he was proposed to the Queen's chamberlain as a courier, there being a vacancy, and was hired without the knowledge of her Majesty, and before she had even seen him. The Austrian nobleman, when he offered him as a courier, said he fairly confessed he hoped, if Bergami behaved well, he might be promoted, because he was a man whose family had seen better days, because he was a faithful servant, and because he had ideas belonging rather to his former than to his present situation. It was almost a condition of his going, that he should go for the present as courier, with the expectation of soon filling some other and higher place.

I do not dwell on this, my lords, as of any importance to the case; for whether I shall think it necessary to prove what I have just stated or not, I consider that I have already disposed of the case in the comments which I have made upon the evidence, and in the appeal which

I have made to the general principles of criminal justice. But, as the conduct of her Majesty has been so unsparingly scrutinized, and as it is important to show that not even impropriety existed, where I utterly defy guilt to be proved, I thought it requisite to dwell on this prominent feature in the cause. If the Queen had frequented companies below her station—if she had lowered her dignity—if she had followed the courses which, though not guilty ones, might be deemed improper in themselves and inconsistent with her high station—if she had been proved guilty of any unworthiness, I could have trod upon high ground still. But I have no occasion to occupy it. I say, guilt there is none—levity there is none—unworthiness there is none. But, if there had been any of the latter, while I dared her accusers to the proof of guilt, admitting levity and even indecorum, I might still have appealed to that which always supports virtue in jeopardy, the course of her former life at home, among her own relations, before she was frowned upon here—while she had protection among you—while she had the most powerful of all protection, that of our late venerable monarch. I hold in my hand a testimonial—which cannot be read, and which I am sure will not be weighed, without the deepest sense of importance; above all, without a feeling of sorrow when we reflect upon the reign that has passed, and compare it with the rule we live under. It is a melancholy proof—more melancholy because we no longer have him who furnishes it among us—but it is a proof how that illustrious sovereign viewed her, whom he knew better than all others—whom he loved more than all the rest of her family did—even than those upon whose affection she had a greater claim; nay, whom he

loved better than he did almost any child of his own. The plainness, the honesty, the intelligible and manly sense of this letter are such that I cannot refrain from the gratification of reading it. It was written in 1804: -

WINDSOR CASTLE, *Nov. 13, 1804*

MY DEAREST DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AND NIECE—Yesterday I and the rest of my family had an interview with the Prince of Wales at Kew. Care was taken on all sides to avoid all subjects of altercation or explanation, consequently the conversation was neither instructive nor entertaining; but it leaves the Prince of Wales in a situation to show whether his desire to return to his family is only verbal or real (a difference which George III. never knew, except in others), which time alone can show. I am not idle in my endeavors to make inquiries that may enable me to communicate some plan for the advantage of the dear child you and I, with so much reason, must interest ourselves in, and its effecting my having the happiness of living more with you is no small incentive to my forming some ideas on the subject; but you may depend on their being not decided upon without your thorough and cordial concurrence, for your authority as mother it is my object to support.

Believe me at all times, my dearest daughter-in-law and niece,

Your most affectionate father-in-law and uncle,

GEORGE R.

Such, my lords, was the opinion which this good man, not ignorant of human affairs, no ill judge of human character, had formed of this near and cherished relation, and upon which, in the most delicate particulars, the care of his granddaughter and the heir of his crown, he honestly, really, and not in mere words, always acted.

I might now read to your lordships a letter from his illustrious successor, not written in the same tone of affection—not indicative of the same feelings of regard—but by no means indicative of any want of confidence, or at least of any desire harshly to trammel his royal consort's conduct. I allude to a letter which has been so often before your lordships in other shapes, that I may not think it necessary to repeat it here. It is a permission to live apart, and a desire never to come together again; the expression of an opinion that their happiness was better consulted and pursued asunder; and a very plain indication that her Majesty's conduct should at least not be watched with all the scrupulousness, all the rigor, all the scrutinizing agency which has resulted in bringing the present Bill of Pains and Penalties before your lordships. [Cries of "Read, read!" Mr. Brougham accordingly read the letter, as follows:]

WINDSOR CASTLE, *April 30, 1796*

MADAM—As Lord Cholmondely informs me that you wish I would define, in writing, the terms upon which we are to live, I shall endeavor to explain with as much clearness and with as much propriety as the nature of the subject will admit. Our inclinations are not in our power, nor should either of us be held answerable to the other, because nature has not made us suitable to each other. Tranquil and comfortable society is, however, in our power; let our intercourse, therefore, be restricted to that, and I will distinctly subscribe to the condition which you required, through Lady Cholmondely, that even in the event of any accident happening to my daughter, which I trust Providence in its mercy will avert, I shall not infringe the terms of the restriction, by proposing at any period a connection of more particular nature. I shall finally close this disagreeable correspondence, trusting that, as we have com-

pletely explained ourselves to each other, the rest of our lives will be passed in uninterrupted tranquillity. I am, madam, with great truth, very sincerely yours,

GEORGE P.

My lords, I do not call this, as it has been termed, a Letter of License; such was the term applied to it, on the former occasion, by those who are now, unhappily for the Queen, no more—those who were the colleagues and coadjutors of the present Ministers—but I think it such an epistle as would make it a matter of natural wonderment to the person who received it that her conduct should ever after—and especially the more rigorously the older the parties were growing—become the subject of the most unceasing and unscrupulous watching, prying, spying, and investigation.

Such then, my lords, is this case. And again let me call on you, even at the risk of repetition, never to dismiss for a moment from your minds the two great points upon which I rest my attack upon the evidence—first, that the accusers have not proved the facts by the good witnesses who were within their reach, whom they had no shadow of pretext for not calling; and secondly, that the witnesses whom they have ventured to call are, every one of them, irreparably damaged in their credit. How, I again ask, is a plot ever to be discovered, except by the means of these two principles? Nay, there are instances in which plots have been discovered, through the medium of the second principle, when the first had happened to fail. When venerable witnesses have been brought forward—when persons above all suspicion have lent themselves for a season to impure plans—when no escape for the guiltless seemed open, no chance of safety to remain—they have

almost providentially escaped from the snare by the second of those two principles; by the evidence breaking down where it was not expected to be sifted; by a weak point being found, where no provision, from the attack being unforeseen, had been made to support it. Your lordships recollect that great passage—I say great, for it is poetically just and eloquent, even were it not inspired—in the Sacred Writings, where the Elders had joined themselves in a plot which appeared to have succeeded “for that,” as the Book says, “they had hardened their hearts, and had turned away their eyes, that they might not look at heaven, and that they might do the purposes of unjust judgment.” But they, though giving a clear, consistent, uncontradicted story, were disappointed, and their victim was wrested from their grip, by the trifling circumstance of a contradiction about a tamarisk tree. Let not man call those contradictions or those falsehoods which false witnesses swear to from needless and heedless falsehood, such as Sacchi about his changing his name—or such as Demont about changing her letters—such as Majocchi about the banker’s clerk—or such as all the other contradictions and falsehoods not going to the main body of the case, but to the main body of the credit of the witnesses—let no man rashly and blindly call these accidents. They are just rather than merciful dispensations of that Providence which wills not that the guilty should triumph, and which favorably protects the innocent!

Such, my lords, is the case now before you! Such is the evidence in support of this measure—evidence inadequate to prove a debt; impotent to deprive of a civil right; ridiculous to convict of the lowest offence; scandalous if brought forward to support a charge of the highest nature

which the law knows; monstrous to ruin the honor, to blast the name of an English Queen! What shall I say, then, if this is the proof by which an act of judicial legislation, a parliamentary sentence, an *ex post facto* law, is sought to be passed against this defenceless woman? My lords, I pray you to pause. I do earnestly beseech you to take heed! You are standing on the brink of a precipice—then beware! It will go forth as your judgment, if sentence shall go against the Queen. But it will be the only judgment you ever pronounced, which, instead of reaching its object, will return and bound back upon those who give it. Save the country, my lords, from the horrors of this catastrophe; save yourselves from this peril; rescue that country, of which you are the ornaments, but in which you can flourish no longer, when severed from the people, than the blossom when cut off from the roots and the stem of the tree. Save that country, that you may continue to adorn it; save the crown, which is in jeopardy; the aristocracy which is shaken; save the altar, which must stagger with the blow that rends its kindred throne! You have said, my lords, you have willed—the Church and the King have willed—that the Queen should be deprived of its solemn service! She has, instead of that solemnity, the heartfelt prayers of the people. She wants no prayers of mine. But I do here pour forth my humble supplications at the throne of mercy, that that mercy may be poured down upon the people, in a larger measure than the merits of its rulers may deserve, and that your hearts may be turned to justice!

LORD MACAULAY

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY was born at Rothley Temple, Leicestershire, in 1800. His father, Zachary Macaulay, had been Governor of Sierra Leone, and was at the time of his son's birth secretary to the chartered company which had founded that colony. At a very early age the boy gave proof of a decided bent toward literature. He was educated at a private school, and in 1818 went into residence at Trinity College, Cambridge. He secured a fellowship and a prize for an essay on the character of William III. His first attempt at a public speech was made in 1824, and seems to have been remarkably successful. In the following year he contributed the well-known essay on "Milton" to the "Edinburgh Review." In 1826 he was called to the bar, but he spent many more hours under the gallery of the House of Commons than in the courts. Distinguished as he quickly became in literature, it was natural that his thoughts should take the direction of politics. In February, 1830, he obtained a seat in the House of Commons for a pocket borough, and in April of that year made his maiden speech on a bill for the removal of Jewish Disabilities. In March, 1831, he made the first of his reform speeches. Sir Robert Peel said of it that it was as beautiful as anything he had ever heard or read. Macaulay now threw himself with ardor into the life of the House of Commons. On the triumph of Earl Grey's Cabinet, and the passing of the Reform Act in June, 1832, Macaulay became one of the commissioners of the Board of Control for India, and applied himself to the study of Indian affairs. Subsequently he accepted a seat in the Supreme Council of India, a body created by the India Act which he had been instrumental in passing. The salary of the office was fixed at £10,000, an income out of which he hoped to save in five years £30,000. While in India, which he reached in 1834, he drafted a penal code which is still administered throughout the Anglo-Indian Empire. In 1838 he returned to England and re-entered Parliament as member for Edinburgh. In the following year he became Secretary of War with a seat in the Melbourne Cabinet. Two years later the Ministry fell, and left him at liberty to resume his literary work. He returned to office in 1846 as Paymaster-General in Lord John Russell's administration. In 1847 he lost his seat and retired into private life, but in 1852, although he refused a place in the Cabinet, he could not bring himself to decline the compliment paid to him by Edinburgh when it returned him to the House of Commons at the head of the poll. The first two volumes of his "History of England" had appeared in December, 1848; the next two

volumes were published in 1855. In 1857 he was raised to the peerage by the title of Baron Macaulay of Rothley, but he never spoke in the Upper House. He died in December, 1859, having lived to bring down his history to the death of William III., although the last half-volume lacks the finish and completeness of the earlier portion.

THE LITERATURE OF ENGLAND

DELIVERED AT THE OPENING OF THE EDINBURGH PHILOSOPHICAL
INSTITUTION, NOVEMBER 4, 1846

I THANK you, gentlemen, for this cordial reception. I have thought it right to steal a short time from duties not unimportant for the purpose of lending my aid to an undertaking calculated, as I think, to raise the credit and to promote the best interests of the city, which has so many claims on my gratitude.

The directors of our institution have requested me to propose to you as a toast "The Literature of Britain." They could not have assigned to me a more agreeable duty. The chief object of this institution is, I conceive, to impart knowledge through the medium of our own language. Edinburgh is already rich in libraries worthy of her fame as a seat of literature and a seat of jurisprudence. A man of letters can here, without difficulty, obtain access to repositories filled with the wisdom of many ages and of many nations. But something was still wanting. We still wanted a library open to that large, that important, that respectable class which, though by no means destitute of liberal curiosity or of sensibility to literary pleasures, is yet forced to be content with what is written in our own tongue. For that class especially, I do not say exclusively, this library is intended. Our directors, I hope, will not be satisfied—I as a member shall certainly not be satisfied—till we possess a noble and complete collec-

tion of English books—till it is impossible to seek in vain on our shelves for a single English book which is valuable either on account of matter or on account of manner; which throws any light on our civil, ecclesiastical, intellectual, or social history; which, in short, can afford either useful instruction or harmless amusement.

From such a collection, placed within the reach of that large and valuable class which I have mentioned, I am disposed to expect great good. And when I say this, I do not take into the account those rare cases to which my valued friend, the Lord Provost, so happily alluded. It is, indeed, not impossible that some man of genius who may enrich our literature with imperishable eloquence and song, or who may extend the empire of our race over matter, may feel in our reading room, for the first time, the consciousness of powers yet undeveloped. It is not impossible that our volumes may suggest the first thought of something great to some future Burns, or Watt, or Arkwright. But I do not speak of these extraordinary cases. What I confidently anticipate is that, through the whole of that class whose benefit we have peculiarly in view, there will be a moral and intellectual improvement; that many hours, which might otherwise be wasted in folly or in vice, will be employed in pursuits which, while they afford the highest and most lasting pleasure, are not only harmless, but purifying and elevating. My own experience, my own observation, justifies me in entertaining this hope. I have had opportunities, both in this and in other countries, of forming some estimate of the effect which is likely to be produced by a good collection of books on a society of young men. There is, I will venture to say, no judicious commanding officer of a regiment who will not tell

you that the vicinity of a valuable library will improve perceptibly the whole character of a mess. I well knew one eminent military servant of the East India Company, a man of great and various accomplishments, a man honorably distinguished both in war and in diplomacy, a man who enjoyed the confidence of some of the greatest generals and statesmen of our time. When I asked him how, having left his country while still a boy, and having passed his youth at military stations in India, he had been able to educate himself, his answer was, that he had been stationed in the neighborhood of an excellent library, that he had been allowed free access to the books, and that they had, at the most critical time of his life, decided his character, and saved him from being a mere smoking, card-playing, punch-drinking lounge.

Some of the objections which have been made to such institutions as ours have been so happily and completely refuted by my friend, the Lord Provost, and by the Most Reverend Prelate who has honored us with his presence this evening, that it would be idle to say again what has been so well said. There is, however, one objection which, with your permission, I will notice. Some men, of whom I wish to speak with great respect, are haunted, as it seems to me, with an unreasonable fear of what they call superficial knowledge. Knowledge, they say, which really deserves the name, is a great blessing to mankind, the ally of virtue, the harbinger of freedom. But such knowledge must be profound. A crowd of people who have a smattering of mathematics, a smattering of astronomy, a smattering of chemistry, who have read a little poetry and a little history, is dangerous to the commonwealth. Such half knowledge is worse than ignorance. And then the authority of Pope

is vouched. Drink deep or taste not; shallow draughts intoxicate; drink largely and that will sober you. I must confess that the danger which alarms these gentlemen never seemed to me very serious; and my reason is this: that I never could prevail on any person who pronounced superficial knowledge a curse and profound knowledge a blessing to tell me what was his standard of profundity. The argument proceeds on the supposition that there is some line between profound and superficial knowledge similar to that which separates truth from falsehood. I know of no such line. When we talk of men of deep science, do we mean that they have got to the bottom or near the bottom of science? Do we mean that they know all that is capable of being known? Do we mean even that they know, in their own special department, all that the smatterers of the next generation will know? Why, if we compare the little truth that we know with the infinite mass of truth which we do not know, we are all shallow together, and the greatest philosophers that ever lived would be the first to confess their shallowness. If we could call up the first of human beings, if we could call up Newton and ask him whether, even in those sciences in which he had no rival, he considered himself as profoundly knowing, he would have told us that he was but a smatterer like ourselves and that the difference between his knowledge and ours vanished when compared with the quantity of truth still undiscovered, just as the distance between a person at the foot of Ben Lomond and one at the top of Ben Lomond vanishes when compared with the distance of the fixed stars.

It is evident, then, that those who are afraid of superficial knowledge do not mean by superficial knowledge,

knowledge which is superficial when compared with the whole quantity of truth capable of being known. For, in that sense, all human knowledge is, and always has been, and always must be, superficial. What, then, is the standard? Is it the same two years together in any country? Is it the same, at the same moment, in any two countries? Is it not notorious that the profundity of one age is the shallowness of the next; that the profundity of one nation is the shallowness of a neighboring nation? Ramohun Roy passed, among Hindus, for a man of profound Western learning; but he would have been but a very superficial member of this institute. Strabo was justly entitled to be called a profound geographer eighteen hundred years ago; but a teacher of geography who had never heard of America would now be laughed at by the girls of a boarding-school. What would now be thought of the greatest chemist of 1746 or of the greatest geologist of 1746? The truth is that, in all experimental science, mankind is, of necessity, constantly advancing. Every generation, of course, has its front rank and its rear rank; but the rear rank of a later generation occupies the ground which was occupied by the front rank of a former generation.

You remember Gulliver's adventures. First he is shipwrecked in a country of little men, and he is a Colossus among them. He strides over the walls of their capital; he stands higher than the cupola of their great temple; he tugs after him a royal fleet; he stretches his legs, and a royal army, with drums beating and colors flying, marches through the gigantic arch; he devours a whole granary for breakfast, eats a herd of cattle for dinner, and washes down his meal with all the hogsheads of a cellar. In his next voyage he is among men sixty feet high. He who in Liliput used to

take people up in his hand in order that he might be able to hear them, is himself taken up in the hands and held to the ears of his masters. It is all that he can do to defend himself with his hanger against the rats and mice. The court ladies amuse themselves with seeing him fight wasps and frogs; the monkey runs off with him to the chimney top; the dwarf drops him into the cream jug and leaves him to swim for his life. Now, was Gulliver a tall or a short man? Why, in his own house at Rotherhithe, he was thought a man of the ordinary stature. Take him to Liliput, and he is Quinbus Flestrin, the Man Mountain. Take him to Brobdingnag, and he is Grildig, the little Manikin. It is the same in science. The pygmies of one society would have passed for giants in another.

It might be amusing to institute a comparison between one of the profoundly learned men of the thirteenth century and one of the superficial students who will frequent our library. Take the great philosopher of the time of Henry III. of England, or Alexander III. of Scotland, the man renowned all over the island, and even as far as Italy and Spain, as the first of astronomers and chemists. What is his astronomy? He is a firm believer in the Ptolemaic system. He never heard of the law of gravitation. Tell him that the succession of day and night is caused by the turning of the earth on its axis. Tell him that in consequence of this motion, the polar diameter of the earth is shorter than the equatorial diameter. Tell him that the succession of summer and winter is caused by the revolution of the earth round the sun. If he does not set you down for an idiot, he lays an information against you before the bishop and has you burned for a heretic. To do him justice, however, if he is ill informed on these points, there are other

points on which Newton and Laplace were mere children when compared with him. He can cast your nativity. He knows what will happen when Saturn is in the House of Life, and what will happen when Mars is in conjunction with the Dragon's Tail. He can read in the stars whether an expedition will be successful; whether the next harvest will be plentiful; which of your children will be fortunate in marriage, and which will be lost at sea. Happy the state, happy the family, which is guided by the counsels of so profound a man! And what but mischief, public and private, can we expect from the temerity and conceit of sciolists who know no more about the heavenly bodies than what they have learned from Sir John Herschel's beautiful little volume? But, to speak seriously, is not a little truth better than a great deal of falsehood? Is not the man who, in the evenings of a fortnight, has acquired a correct notion of the solar system a more profound astronomer than a man who has passed thirty years in reading lectures about the *primum mobile* and in drawing schemes of horoscopes?

Or take chemistry. Our philosopher of the thirteenth century shall be, if you please, a universal genius, chemist as well as astronomer. He has, perhaps, got so far as to know that if he mix charcoal and saltpetre in certain proportions and then apply fire, there will be an explosion which will shatter all his retorts and aludels; and he is proud of knowing what will, in a later age, be familiar to all the idle boys in the kingdom. But there are departments of science in which he need not fear the rivalry of Black, or Lavoisier, or Cavendish, or Davy. He is in hot pursuit of the Philosopher's Stone, of the stone that is to bestow wealth, and health, and longevity. He has a long array of strangely shaped vessels, filled with red oil and

white oil, constantly boiling. The moment of projection is at hand, and soon all his kettles and gridirons will be turned into pure gold. Poor Professor Faraday can do nothing of the sort. I should deceive you if I held out to you the smallest hope that he will ever turn your halfpence into sovereigns. But if you can induce him to give at our institute a course of lectures such as I once heard him give at the Royal Institution to children in the Christmas holidays, I can promise you that you will know more about the effects produced on bodies by heat and moisture than was known to some alchemists who, in the Middle Ages, were thought worthy of the patronage of kings.

As it has been in science, so it has been in literature. Compare the literary acquirements of the great men of the thirteenth century with those which will be within the reach of many who will frequent our reading-room. As to Greek learning, the profound man of the thirteenth century was absolutely on a par with the superficial man of the nineteenth. In the modern languages, there was not, six hundred years ago, a single volume which is now read. The library of our profound scholar must have consisted entirely of Latin books. We will suppose him to have had both a large and choice collection. We will allow him thirty, nay forty manuscripts, and among them a Virgil, a Terence, a Lucan, an Ovid, a Statius, a great deal of Livy, a great deal of Cicero. In allowing him all this, we are dealing most liberally with him; for it is much more likely that his shelves were filled with treatises on school divinity and canon law, composed by writers whose names the world has very wisely forgotten. But even if we suppose him to have possessed all that is most valuable in the literature of Rome, I say with perfect confidence that, both in respect

of intellectual improvement and in respect of intellectual pleasures, he was far less favorably situated than a man who now, knowing only the English language, has a book-case filled with the best English works. Our great man of the Middle Ages could not form any conception of any tragedy approaching "Macbeth" or "Lear," or of any comedy equal to "Henry IV." or "Twelfth Night." The best epic poem that he had read was far inferior to the "Paradise Lost"; and all the tomes of his philosophers were not worth a page of the "Novum Organum."

The "Novum Organum," it is true, persons who know only English must read in a translation, and this reminds me of one great advantage which such persons will derive from our institution. They will, in our library, be able to form some acquaintance with the master minds of remote ages and foreign countries. A large part of what is best worth knowing in ancient literature, and in the literature of France, Italy, Germany, and Spain, has been translated into our own tongue. It is scarcely possible that the translation of any book of the highest class can be equal to the original. But, though the finer touches may be lost in the copy, the great outlines will remain. An Englishman who never saw the frescoes in the Vatican may yet, from engravings, form some notion of the exquisite grace of Raphael and of the sublimity and energy of Michelangelo. And so the genius of Homer is seen in the poorest version of the "Iliad"; the genius of Cervantes is seen in the poorest version of "Don Quixote." Let it not be supposed that I wish to dissuade any person from studying either the ancient languages or the languages of modern Europe. Far from it. I prize most highly those keys of knowledge, and I think that no man who has leisure for

study ought to be content until he possesses several of them. I have always much admired a saying of the Emperor Charles V.—“When I learn a new language, I feel as if I had got a new soul.” But I would console those who have not time to make themselves linguists, by assuring them that, by means of their own mother tongue, they may obtain ready access to vast intellectual treasures, to treasures such as might have been envied by the greatest linguists of the age of Charles V., to treasures surpassing those which were possessed by Aldus, by Erasmus, and by Melancthon.

And thus I am brought back to the point from which I started. I have been requested to invite you to fill your glasses to the Literature of Britain; to that literature, the brightest, the purest, the most durable of all the glories of our country; to that literature, so rich in precious truth and precious fiction; to that literature which boasts of the prince of all poets and of the prince of all philosophers; to that literature which has exercised an influence wider than that of our commerce, and mightier than that of our arms; to that literature which has taught France the principles of liberty, and has furnished Germany with models of art; to that literature which forms a tie closer than the tie of consanguinity between us and the commonwealths of the Valley of the Mississippi; to that literature before the light of which impious and cruel superstitions are fast taking flight on the banks of the Ganges; to that literature which will, in future ages, instruct and delight the unborn millions who will have turned the Australasian and Caffrian deserts into cities and gardens. To the Literature of Britain, then! And, wherever British literature spreads, may it be attended by British virtue and by British freedom!

LORD BEACONSFIELD

BENJAMIN D'ISRAELI, EARL OF BEACONSFIELD, was born in 1804. He was the son of Isaac D'Israeli, the descendant of a Jewish family which, having been driven from Spain by the Inquisition toward the end of the fifteenth century, settled at Venice, whence the grandfather of the subject of this sketch removed to England in 1748. Both Isaac D'Israeli and his wife, who had been born and bred a Jewess, gradually dropped connection with their coreligionists, with whom their son seems never to have associated himself. Benjamin D'Israeli was not sent to one of the great public schools of England, nor to a university, but, having received a desultory education, was articled to a solicitor. He soon tired of legal drudgery, however, and, devoting himself to literature, published a series of novels which attracted a great deal of attention. In 1837 he entered the House of Commons, and, although his first speech was a failure, he gradually acquired a great deal of influence in the Tory ranks, and organized the secession of the protectionist rump of that party which brought about the downfall of Sir Robert Peel. When Lord Derby became Premier in 1852, D'Israeli was made Chancellor of the Exchequer. The same place was allotted to him in 1858, when Lord Derby next formed a Cabinet, and he succeeded Lord Derby upon the latter's resignation of the post of Premier in 1868. In 1874 D'Israeli became for the second time Prime Minister, and retained office until 1880, having meanwhile accepted the title of Earl of Beaconsfield. He died in 1881, at the age of seventy-seven.

DEMOCRACY UNSUITED FOR ENGLAND

DELIVERED IN 1865

SIR, I could have wished, and once I almost believed, that it was not necessary for me to take part in this debate. I look on this discussion as the natural epilogue of the Parliament of 1859; we remember the prologue. I consider this to be a controversy between the educated section of the Liberal party and that section of the Liberal

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party, according to their companions and colleagues, not entitled to an epithet so euphuistic and complimentary. But after the speech of the Minister, I hardly think it would become me, representing the opinions of the gentlemen with whom I am acting on this side of the House, entirely to be silent. We have a measure before us to-night which is to increase the franchise in boroughs. Without reference to any other circumstances I object to that measure. I object to it because an increase of the franchise in boroughs is a proposal to redistribute political power in the country. I do not think political power in the country ought to be treated partially; from the very nature of things it is impossible, if there is to be a redistribution of political power, that you can only regard the suffrage as it affects one section of the constituent body. Whatever the proposition of the honorable gentleman, whether abstractedly it may be expedient or not, this is quite clear, that it must be considered not only in relation to the particular persons with whom it will deal, but to other persons with whom it does not deal, though it would affect them. And therefore it has always been quite clear that if you deal with the subject popularly called Parliamentary Reform, you must deal with it comprehensively. The arrangements you may make with reference to one part of the community may not be objectionable in themselves, but may be extremely objectionable if you consider them with reference to other parts.

Consequently it has been held—and the more we consider the subject the more true and just appears to be the conclusion—that if you deal with the matter you must deal with it comprehensively. You must not only consider borough constituencies, you must consider county constituencies: and when persons rise up and urge their claims to

be introduced into the constituent body, even if you think there is a plausible claim substantiated on their part, you are bound in policy and justice to consider also the claims of other bodies not in possession of the franchise, but whose right to consideration may be equally great. And so clear is it when you come to the distribution of power that you must consider the subject in all its bearings, that even honorable gentlemen who have taken part in this debate have not been able to avoid the question of what they call the redistribution of seats—a very important part of the distribution of power. It is easy for the honorable member for Liskeard, for example, to rise and say, in supporting this measure for the increase of the borough franchise, that it is impossible any longer to conceal the anomalies of our system in regard to the distribution of seats. "Is it not monstrous," he asks, "that Calne, with 173 voters, should return a member, while Glasgow returns only two, with a constituency of 20,000?" Well, it may be equally monstrous that Liskeard should return one member, and that Birkenhead should only make a similar return. The distribution of seats, as any one must know who has ever considered the subject deeply and with a sense of responsibility toward the country, is one of the most profound and difficult questions that can be brought before the House. It is all very well to treat it in an easy, offhand manner; but how are you to reconcile the case of North Cheshire, of North Durham, of West Kent, and many other counties, where you find four or six great towns, with a population, perhaps, of 100,000, returning six members to this House, while the rest of the population of the county, though equal in amount, returns only two members? How are you to meet the case of the representation of South Lan-

cashire in reference to its boroughs? Why, those are more anomalous than the case of Calne.

Then there is the question of Scotland. With a population hardly equal to that of the metropolis, and with wealth greatly inferior—probably not more than two-thirds of the amount—Scotland yet possesses forty-eight members, while the metropolis has only twenty. Do you Reformers mean to say that you are prepared to disfranchise Scotland; or that you are going to develop the representation of the metropolis in proportion to its population and property; and so allow a country like England, so devoted to local government and so influenced by local feeling, to be governed by London? And, therefore, when those speeches are made which gain a cheer for the moment, and are supposed to be so unanswerable as arguments in favor of parliamentary change, I would recommend the House to recollect that this, as a question, is one of the most difficult and one of the deepest that can possibly engage the attention of the country. The fact is this—in the representation of this country you do not depend on population or on property merely, or on both conjoined; you have to see that there is something besides population and property—you have to take care that the country itself is represented. That is one reason why I am opposed to the second reading of the bill. There is another objection which I have to this bill brought forward by the honorable member for Leeds, and that is, that it is brought forward by the member for Leeds. I do not consider this a subject which ought to be intrusted to the care and guidance of any independent member of this House. If there be one subject more than another that deserves the consideration and demands the responsibility of the government, it certainly is the recon-

struction of our parliamentary system; and it is the government or the political party candidates for power, who recommend a policy, and who will not shrink from the responsibility of carrying that policy into effect if the opportunity be afforded to them, who alone are qualified to deal with a question of this importance. But, sir, I shall be told, as we have been told in a previous portion of the adjourned debate, that the two great parties of the state cannot be trusted to deal with this question, because they have both trifled with it. That is a charge which has been made repeatedly during this discussion and on previous occasions, and certainly a graver one could not be made in this House. I am not prepared to admit that even our opponents have trifled with this question. We have had a very animated account by the right honorable gentleman who has just addressed us as to what may be called the Story of the Reform Measures. It was animated, but it was not accurate. Mine will be accurate, though I fear it will not be animated.

I am not prepared to believe that English statesmen, though they be opposed to me in politics, and may sit on opposite benches, could ever have intended to trifle with this question. I think that possibly they may have made great mistakes in the course which they took; they may have miscalculated, they may have been misled; but I do not believe that any men in this country, occupying the posts, the eminent posts, of those who have recommended any reconstruction of our parliamentary system in modern days, could have advised a course which they disapproved. They may have thought it perilous, they may have thought it difficult, but though they may have been misled I am convinced they must have felt that it was necessary. Let me

say a word in favor of one with whom I have had no political connection, and to whom I have been placed in constant opposition in this House when he was an honored member of it—I mean Lord Russell. I cannot at all agree with the lively narrative of the right honorable gentleman, according to which Parliamentary Reform was but the creature of Lord John Russell, whose cabinet, controlled by him with the vigor of a Richelieu, at all times disapproved his course; still less can I acknowledge that merely to amuse himself, or in a moment of difficulty to excite some popular sympathy, Lord John Russell was a statesman always with Reform in his pocket, ready to produce it and make a display. How different from that astute and sagacious statesman now at the head of her Majesty's Government, who I almost hoped to have seen in his place this evening. I am sure it would have given the House great pleasure to have seen him here, and the House itself would have assumed a more good-humored appearance. I certainly did hope that the noble lord would have been enabled to be in his place and prepared to support his policy. According to the animated but not quite accurate account of the right honorable gentleman who has just sat down, all that Lord Derby did was to sanction the humor and caprice of Lord John Russell. It is true that Lord John Russell when Prime Minister recommended that her Majesty in the speech from the throne should call the attention of Parliament to the expediency of noticing the condition of our representative system; but Lord John Russell unfortunately shortly afterward retired from his eminent position.

He was succeeded by one of the most considerable statesmen of our days, a statesman not connected with the political school of Lord John Russell, who was called to power

not only with the assistance of Lord John Russell and the leading members of the Whig party, but supported by the whole class of eminent statesmen who had been educated in the same school and under the same distinguished master. This eminent statesman, however, is entirely forgotten. The right honorable gentleman overlooks the fact that Lord Aberdeen, when Prime Minister, and when all the principal places in his Cabinet were filled with the disciples of Sir Robert Peel, did think it his duty to recommend the same counsel to her Majesty. But this is an important, and not the only important, item in the history of the Reform Bill which has been ignored by the right honorable gentleman. The time, however, came when Lord Aberdeen gave place to another statesman, who has been complimented on his sagacity in evading the subject, as if such a course would be a subject for congratulation. Let me vindicate the policy of Lord Palmerston in his absence. He did not evade the question. Lord Palmerston followed the example of Lord John Russell. He followed the example also of Lord Aberdeen, and recommended her Majesty to notice the subject in the speech from the throne. What becomes, then, of the lively narrative of the right honorable gentleman, and what becomes of the inference and conclusions which he drew from it? Not only is his account inaccurate, but it is injurious, as I take it, to the course of sound policy and the honor of public men. Well, now you have three Prime Ministers bringing forward the question of Parliamentary Reform; you have Lord John Russell, Lord Aberdeen, and you have even that statesman who, according to the account of the right honorable gentleman, was so eminent for his sagacity in evading the subject altogether. Now, let me ask the House to consider the position of Lord Derby

when he was called to power, a position which you cannot rightly understand if you accept as correct the fallacious statements of the right honorable gentleman. I will give the House an account of this subject, the accuracy of which I believe neither side will impugn. It may not possibly be without interest, and will not, I am sure, be without significance. Lord Derby was sent for by her Majesty—an unwilling candidate for office, for let me remind the House that at that moment there was an adverse majority of 140 in the House of Commons, and I therefore do not think that Lord Derby was open to any imputation in hesitating to accept political responsibility under such circumstances.

Lord Derby laid these considerations before her Majesty. I speak, of course, with reserve. I say nothing now which I have not said before on the discussion of political subjects in this House. But when a government comes in on Reform and remains in power six years without passing any measure of the kind, it is possible that these circumstances, too, may be lost sight of. Lord Derby advised her Majesty not to form a government under his influence, because there existed so large a majority against him in the House of Commons, and because this question of Reform was placed in such a position that it was impossible to deal with it as he should wish. But it should be remembered that Lord Derby was a member of the famous Cabinet which carried the Reform Bill in 1832. Lord Derby, as Lord Stanley, was in the House of Commons one of the most efficient promoters of the measure. Lord Derby believed that the bill had tended to effect the purpose for which it was designed, and although no man superior to prejudices could fail to see that some who were entitled to the exercise of the franchise were still debarred from the privilege, yet he

could not also fail to perceive the danger which would arise from our tampering with the franchise. On these grounds Lord Derby declined the honor which her Majesty desired to confer upon him, but the appeal was repeated. Under these circumstances it would have been impossible for any English statesman longer to hesitate, but I am bound to say that there was no other contract or understanding further than that which prevails among men, however different their politics, who love their country and wish to maintain its greatness. I am bound to add that there was an understanding at the time existing among men of weight on both sides of the House that the position in which the Reform question was placed was one embarrassing to the crown and not creditable to the House, and that any minister trying his best to deal with it under these circumstances would receive the candid consideration of the House. It was thought, moreover, that a time might possibly arrive when both parties would unite in endeavoring to bring about a solution which would tend to the advantage and benefit of the country. And yet, says the right honorable gentleman, it was only in 1860 that the portentous truth flashed across the mind of the country—only in 1860, after so many ministers had been dealing with the question for so many years. All I can say is that this was the question, and the only question, which engaged the attention of Lord Derby's Cabinet. The question was whether they could secure the franchise for a certain portion of the working classes, who, by their industry, their intelligence, and their integrity, showed that they were worthy of such a possession, without at the same time overwhelming the rest of the constituency by the numbers of those whom they admitted. That, sir, was the only question which occupied the attention of the

government of Lord Derby, and yet the right honorable gentleman says that it was in 1860 that the attention of the public was first called to the subject, when, in fact, the question of Parliamentary Reform had been before them for ten years, and on a greater scale than that embraced by the measure under consideration this evening.

I need not remind the House of the reception which Lord Derby's bill encountered. It is neither my disposition, nor, I am sure, that of any of my colleagues, to complain of the votes of this House on that occasion. Political life must be taken as you find it, and as far as I am concerned not a word shall escape me on the subject. But from the speeches made the first night, and from the speech made by the right honorable gentleman this evening, I believe I am right in vindicating the conduct pursued by the party with which I act. I believe that the measure which we brought forward was the only one which has tended to meet the difficulties which beset this question. Totally irrespective of other modes of dealing with the question, there were two franchises especially proposed on this occasion, which, in my mind, would have done much toward solving the difficulty. The first was the franchise founded upon personal property, and the second the franchise founded upon partial occupation. Those two franchises, irrespective of other modes by which we attempted to meet the want and the difficulty—these two franchises, had they been brought into committee of this House, would, in my opinion, have been so shaped and adapted that they would have effected those objects which the majority of the House desire. We endeavored in that bill to make proposals which were in the genius of the English constitution. We did not consider the constitution a mere phrase. We knew

that the constitution of this country is a monarchy tempered by co-ordinate estates of the realm. We knew that the House of Commons is an estate of the realm; we knew that the estates of the realm form a political body, invested with political power for the government of the country and for the public good; yet we thought that it was a body founded upon privilege and not upon right. It is, therefore, in the noblest and properest sense of the word, an aristocratic body, and from that characteristic the Reform Bill of 1832 did not derogate; and if at this moment we could contrive, as we did in 1859, to add considerably to the number of the constituent body, we should not change that characteristic, but it would still remain founded upon an aristocratic principle.

Well, now the Secretary of State [Sir G. Grey] has addressed us to-night in a very remarkable speech. He also takes up the history of Reform, and before I touch upon some of the features of that speech it is my duty to refer to the statements which he made with regard to the policy which the government of Lord Derby was prepared to assume after the general election. By a total misrepresentation of the character of the amendment proposed by Lord John Russell, which threw the government of 1858 into a minority, and by quoting a passage from a very long speech of mine in 1859, the right honorable gentleman most dexterously conveyed these two propositions to the House—first, that Lord John Russell had proposed an amendment to our Reform Bill, by which the House declared that no bill could be satisfactory by which the working classes were not admitted to the franchise—one of our main objects being that the working classes should in a great measure be admitted to the franchise; and, secondly, that after the election I was

prepared, as the organ of the government, to give up all the schemes for those franchises founded upon personal property, partial occupation, and other grounds, and to substitute a bill lowering the borough qualification. That conveyed to the House a totally inaccurate idea of the amendment of Lord John Russell. There was not a single word in that amendment about the working classes. There was not a single phrase upon which that issue was raised, nor could it have been raised, because our bill, whether it could have effected the object or not, was a bill which proposed greatly to enfranchise the working classes. And as regards the statement I made, it simply was this. The election was over—we were still menaced, but we, still acting according to our sense of duty, recommended in the royal speech that the question of a reform of Parliament should be dealt with; because I must be allowed to remind the House that whatever may have been our errors, we proposed a bill which we intended to carry. And having once taken up the question as a matter of duty, no doubt greatly influenced by what we considered the unhappy mistakes of our predecessors, and the difficult position in which they had placed Parliament and the country, we determined not to leave the question until it had been settled. But although still menaced, we felt it to be our duty to recommend to her Majesty to introduce the question of Reform when the Parliament of 1859 met; and how were we, except in that spirit of compromise which is the principal characteristic of our political system, how could we introduce a Reform Bill after that election, without in some degree considering the possibility of lowering the borough franchise? But it was not a franchise of £6, but it was an arrangement that was to be taken with the rest of the bill,

and if it had been met in the same spirit we might have retained our places. But, says the right honorable gentleman, pursuing his history of the Reform question, when the government of Lord Derby retired from office "we came in, and we were perfectly sincere in our intentions to carry a Reform Bill; but we experienced such opposition, and never was there such opposition. There was the right honorable gentleman," meaning myself, "he absolutely allowed our bill to be read a second time."

That tremendous reckless opposition to the right honorable gentleman, which allowed the bill to be read a second time, seems to have laid the government prostrate. If he had succeeded in throwing out the bill, the right honorable gentleman and his friends would have been relieved from great embarrassment. But the bill having been read a second time, the government were quite overcome, and it appears they never have recovered from the paralysis up to this time. The right honorable gentleman was good enough to say that the proposition of his government was rather coldly received upon his side of the House, but he said "nobody spoke against it." Nobody spoke against the bill on this side, but I remember some most remarkable speeches from the right honorable gentleman's friends. There was the great city of Edinburgh, represented by acute eloquence of which we never weary, and which again upon the present occasion we have heard; there was the great city of Bristol, represented on that occasion among the opponents, and many other constituencies of equal importance. But the most remarkable speech, which "killed cock robin," was absolutely delivered by one who might be described as almost a member of the government—the Chairman of Ways and Means [Mr. Massey], who, I believe,

spoke from immediately behind the Prime Minister. Did the government express any disapprobation of such conduct? They have promoted him to a great post, and have sent him to India with an income of fabulous amount. And now they are astonished they cannot carry a Reform Bill. If they removed all those among their supporters who oppose such bills by preferring them to posts of great confidence and great lucre, how can they suppose that they will every carry one?

Looking at the policy of the government, I am not at all astonished at the speech which the right honorable gentleman, the Secretary of State, has made this evening. Of which speech I may observe, that although it was remarkable for many things, yet there were two conclusions at which the right honorable gentleman arrived. First, the repudiation of the rights of man, and, next, the repudiation of the £6 franchise. The first is a great relief, and, remembering what the feeling of the House was only a year ago, when, by the dangerous but fascinating eloquence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, we were led to believe that the days of Tom Paine had returned, and that Rousseau was to be rivalled by a new social contract, it must be a great relief to every respectable man here to find that not only are we not to have the rights of man, but we are not even to have the 1862 franchise. It is a matter, I think, of great congratulation, and I am ready to give credit to the Secretary of State for the honesty with which he has expressed himself, and I only wish we had had the same frankness, the same honesty we always have, arising from a clear view of his subject, in the first year of the Parliament as we have had in the last. I will follow the example of the right honorable gentleman and his friends. I have not

changed my opinions upon the subject of what is called Parliamentary Reform. All that has occurred, all that I have observed, all the results of my reflections, lead me to this more and more—that the principle upon which the constituencies of this country should be increased is one not of radical, but I may say of lateral reform—the extension of the franchise, not its degradation. And although I do not wish in any way to deny that we were in the most difficult position when the Parliament of 1859 met, being anxious to assist the crown and the Parliament by proposing some moderate measure which men on both sides might support, we did, to a certain extent, agree to some modification of the £10 franchise—to what extent no one knows; but I may say that it would have been one which would not at all have affected the character of the franchise, such as I and my colleagues wished to maintain. Yet I confess that my opinion is opposed, as it originally was, to any course of the kind. I think that it would fail in its object, that it would not secure the introduction of that particular class which we all desire to introduce, but that it would introduce many others who are totally unworthy of the suffrage. But I think it is possible to increase the electoral body of the country by the introduction of voters upon principles in unison with the principles of the Constitution, so that the suffrage should remain a privilege, and not a right—a privilege to be gained by virtue, by intelligence, by industry, by integrity, and to be exercised for the common good of the country. I think if you quit that ground—if you once admit that every man has a right to vote whom you cannot prove to be disqualified—you would change the character of the Constitution, and you would change it in a manner which will tend to lower the importance of this country. Between the scheme

we brought forward and the measure brought forward by the honorable member for Leeds, and the inevitable conclusion which its principal supporters acknowledge it must lead to, it is a question between an aristocratic government in the proper sense of the term—that is, a government by the best men of all classes—and a democracy. I doubt very much whether a democracy is a government that would suit this country; and it is just as well that the House, when coming to a vote on this question, should really consider if that be the real issue, between retaining the present Constitution—not the present constitutional body, but between the present Constitution and a democracy.

It is just as well for the House to recollect that what is at issue is of some price. You must remember, not to use the word profanely, that we are dealing really with a peculiar people. There is no country at the present moment that exists under the circumstances and under the same conditions as the people of this realm. You have, for example, an ancient, powerful, richly-endowed Church, and perfect religious liberty. You have unbroken order and complete freedom. You have estates as large as the Romans; you have a commercial system of enterprise such as Carthage and Venice united never equalled. And you must remember that this peculiar country with these strong contrasts is governed not by force; it is not governed by standing armies—it is governed by a most singular series of traditional influences, which generation after generation cherishes and preserves because they know that they embalm customs and represent the law. And, with this, what have you done? You have created the greatest empire that ever existed in modern times. You have amassed a capital of fabulous amount. You have devised and sustained a sys-

tem of credit still more marvellous, and above all, you have established and maintained a scheme, so vast and complicated, of labor and industry, that the history of the world offers no parallel to it. And all these mighty creations are out of all proportion to the essential and indigenous elements and resources of the country. If you destroy that state of society, remember this—England cannot begin again.

There are countries which have been in great peril and gone through great suffering; there are the United States, which in our own immediate day have had great trials; you have had—perhaps even now in the States of America you have—a protracted and fratricidal civil war which has lasted for four years; but if it lasted for four years more, vast as would be the disaster and desolation, when ended the United States might begin again, because the United States would only be in the same condition that England was at the end of the War of the Roses, and probably she had not even 3,000,000 of population, with vast tracts of virgin soil and mineral treasures, not only undeveloped but undiscovered. Then you have France. France had a real revolution in our days and those of our predecessors—a real revolution, not merely a political and social revolution. You had the institutions of the country uprooted, the orders of society abolished—you had even the landmarks and local names removed and erased. But France could begin again. France had the greatest spread of the most exuberant soil in Europe; she had, and always had, a very limited population, living in a most simple manner. France, therefore, could begin again. But England—the England we know, the England we live in, the England of which we are proud—could not begin again. I don't

mean to say that after great troubles England would become a howling wilderness. No doubt the good sense of the people would to some degree prevail, and some fragments of the national character would survive; but it would not be the old England—the England of power and tradition, of credit and capital, that now exists. That is not in the nature of things, and, under these circumstances, I hope the House will, when the question before us is one impeaching the character of our Constitution, sanction no step that has a preference for democracy, but that they will maintain the ordered state of free England in which we live. I do not think that in this country generally there is a desire at this moment for any further change in this matter. I think the general opinion of the country on the subject of Parliamentary Reform is that our views are not sufficiently matured on either side. Certainly, so far as I can judge, I cannot refuse the conclusion that such is the condition of honorable gentlemen opposite. We all know the paper circulated among us before Parliament met, on which the speech of the honorable member from Maidstone commented this evening. I quite sympathize with him; it was one of the most interesting contributions to our elegiac literature I have heard for some time. But is it in this House only that we find these indications of the want of maturity in our views upon this subject? Our tables are filled at this moment with propositions of eminent members of the Liberal party—men eminent for character or talent, and for both—and what are these propositions? All devices to counteract the character of the Liberal Reform Bill, to which they are opposed: therefore, it is quite clear, when we read these propositions and speculations, that the mind and intellect of the party have arrived at no conclusions on the subject.

I do not speak of honorable gentlemen with disrespect; I treat them with the utmost respect; I am prepared to give them the greatest consideration; but I ask whether these publications are not proofs that the active intelligence of the Liberal party is itself entirely at sea on the subject?

I may say there has been more consistency, more calmness and consideration on this subject on the part of gentlemen on this side than on the part of those who seem to arrogate to themselves the monopoly of treating this subject. I can, at least, in answer to those who charge us with trifling with the subject, appeal to the recollection of every candid man, and say that we treated it with sincerity—we prepared our measure with care, and submitted it to the House, trusting to its candid consideration—we spared no pains in its preparation: and at this time I am bound to say, speaking for my colleagues, in the main principles on which that bill was founded—namely, the extension of the franchise, not its degradation, will be found the only solution that will ultimately be accepted by the country. Therefore, I cannot say that I look to this question, or that those with whom I act look to it, with any embarrassment. We feel we have done our duty; and it is not without some gratification that I have listened to the candid admissions of many honorable gentlemen who voted against it, that they feel the defeat of that measure by the Liberal party was a great mistake. So far as we are concerned, I repeat, we, as a party, can look to Parliamentary Reform not as an embarrassing subject; but that is no reason why we should agree to the measure of the honorable member for Leeds. It would reflect no credit on the House of Commons. It is a mean device. I give all credit to the honorable member for Leeds for his conscientious feeling; but it would be

a mockery to take this bill; from the failures of the government and the whole of the circumstances that attended it, it is of that character that I think the House will best do its duty to the country, and will best meet the constituencies with a very good understanding, if they reject the measure by a decided majority.

"CONSERVATISM"

MANCHESTER, APRIL 3, 1872

GENTLEMEN—The chairman has correctly reminded you that this is not the first time that my voice has been heard in this hall. But that was an occasion very different from that which now assembles us together—was nearly thirty years ago, when I endeavored to support and stimulate the flagging energies of an institution in which I thought there were the germs of future refinement and intellectual advantage to the rising generation of Manchester, and since I have been here on this occasion I have learned with much gratification that it is now counted among your most flourishing institutions. There was also another and more recent occasion when the gracious office fell to me to distribute among the members of the Mechanics' Institution those prizes which they had gained through their study in letters and in science. Gentlemen, these were pleasing offices, and if life consisted only of such offices you would not have to complain of it. But life has its masculine duties, and we are assembled here to fulfil some of the most important of these, when, as citizens of a free country, we are assembled together to declare our determination to maintain,

to uphold the Constitution to which we are debtors, in our opinion, for our freedom and our welfare.

Gentlemen, there seems at first something incongruous that one should be addressing the population of so influential and intelligent a county as Lancashire who is not locally connected with them, and, gentlemen, I will frankly admit that this circumstance did for a long time make me hesitate in accepting your cordial and generous invitation. But, gentlemen, after what occurred yesterday, after receiving more than two hundred addresses from every part of this great county, after the welcome which then greeted me, I feel that I should not be doing justice to your feelings, I should not do my duty to myself, if I any longer consider my presence here to-night to be an act of presumption. Gentlemen, though it may not be an act of presumption, it still is, I am told, an act of great difficulty. Our opponents assure us that the Conservative party has no political programme; and, therefore, they must look with much satisfaction to one whom you honor to-night by considering him the leader and representative of your opinions when he comes forward, at your invitation, to express to you what that programme is. The Conservative party are accused of having no programme of policy. If by a programme is meant a plan to despoil churches and plunder landlords, I admit we have no programme. If by a programme is meant a policy which assails or menaces every institution and every interest, every class and every calling in the country, I admit we have no programme. But if to have a policy with distinct ends, and these such as most deeply interest the great body of the nation, be a becoming programme for a political party, then I contend we have an adequate programme, and one

which, here or elsewhere, I shall always be prepared to assert and to vindicate.

Gentlemen, the programme of the Conservative party is to maintain the Constitution of the country. I have not come down to Manchester to deliver an essay on the English Constitution; but when the banner of Republicanism is unfurled—when the fundamental principles of our institutions are controverted—I think, perhaps, it may not be inconvenient that I should make some few practical remarks upon the character of our Constitution—upon that monarchy limited by the co-ordinate authority of the estates of the realm, which, under the title of Queen, Lords, and Commons, has contributed so greatly to the prosperity of this country, and with the maintenance of which I believe that prosperity is bound up.

Gentlemen, since the settlement of that Constitution, now nearly two centuries ago, England has never experienced a revolution, though there is no country in which there has been so continuous and such considerable change. How is this? Because the wisdom of your forefathers placed the prize of supreme power without the sphere of human passions. Whatever the struggle of parties, whatever the strife of factions, whatever the excitement and exaltation of the public mind, there has always been something in this country round which all classes and parties could rally, representing the majesty of the law, the administration of justice, and involving, at the same time, the security for every man's rights and the fountain of honor. Now, gentlemen, it is well clearly to comprehend what is meant by a country not having a revolution for two centuries. It means, for that space, the unbroken exercise and enjoyment of the ingenuity of man. It means for that space the

continuous application of the discoveries of science to his comfort and convenience. It means the accumulation of capital, the elevation of labor, the establishment of those admirable factories which cover your district; the unwearied improvement of the cultivation of the land, which has extracted from a somewhat churlish soil harvests more exuberant than those furnished by lands nearer to the sun. It means the continuous order which is the only parent of personal liberty and political right. And you owe all these, gentlemen, to the throne.

There is another powerful and most beneficial influence which is also exercised by the crown. Gentlemen, I am a party man. I believe that, without party, parliamentary government is impossible. I look upon parliamentary government as the noblest government in the world, and certainly the one most suited to England. But without the discipline of political connection, animated by the principle of private honor, I feel certain that a popular assembly would sink before the power or the corruption of a minister. Yet, gentlemen, I am not blind to the faults of party government. It has one great defect. Party has a tendency to warp the intelligence, and there is no minister, however resolved he may be in treating a great public question, who does not find some difficulty in emancipating himself from the traditionary prejudice on which he has long acted. It is, therefore, a great merit in our Constitution, that before a minister introduces a measure to Parliament, he must submit it to an intelligence superior to all party,* and entirely free from influences of that character.

I know it will be said, gentlemen, that, however beautiful in theory, the personal influence of the sovereign is now absorbed in the responsibility of the minister. Gentle-

men, I think you will find there is great fallacy in this view. The principles of the English Constitution do not contemplate the absence of personal influence on the part of the sovereign; and if they did, the principles of human nature would prevent the fulfilment of such a theory. Gentlemen, I need not tell you that I am now making on this subject abstract observations of general application to our institutions and our history. But take the case of a sovereign of England who accedes to his throne at the earliest age the law permits, and who enjoys a long reign—take an instance like that of George III. From the earliest moment of his accession that sovereign is placed in constant communication with the most able statesmen of the period, and of all parties. Even with average ability it is impossible not to perceive that such a sovereign must soon attain a great mass of political information and political experience. Information and experience, gentlemen, whether they are possessed by a sovereign or by the humblest of his subjects, are irresistible in life. No man with the vast responsibility that devolves upon an English minister can afford to treat with indifference a suggestion that has not occurred to him, or information with which he had not been previously supplied. But, gentlemen, pursue this view of the subject. The longer the reign, the influence of that sovereign must proportionately increase. All the illustrious statesmen who served his youth disappear. A new generation of public servants rises up, there is a critical conjunction in affairs—a moment of perplexity and peril. Then it is that the sovereign can appeal to a similar state of affairs that occurred perhaps thirty years before. When all are in doubt among his servants, he can quote the advice that was given by the illustrious men of his early

years, and, though he may maintain himself within the strictest limits of the Constitution, who can suppose, when such information and such suggestions are made by the most exalted person in the country, that they can be without effect? No, gentlemen; a minister who could venture to treat such influence with indifference would not be a constitutional minister, but an arrogant idiot.

Gentlemen, the influence of the crown is not confined merely to political affairs. England is a domestic country. Here the home is revered and the hearth is sacred. The nation is represented by a family—the royal family; and if that family is educated with a sense of responsibility and a sentiment of public duty, it is difficult to exaggerate the salutary influence they may exercise over a nation. It is not merely an influence upon manners; it is not merely that they are a model for refinement and for good taste—they affect the heart as well as the intelligence of the people; and in the hour of public adversity, or in the anxious conjuncture of public affairs, the nation rallies round the family and the throne, and its spirit is animated and sustained by the expression of public affection. 'Gentlemen, there is yet one other remark that I would make upon our monarchy, though had it not been for recent circumstances, I should have refrained from doing so. An attack has recently been made upon the throne on account of the costliness of the institution. Gentlemen, I shall not dwell upon the fact that if the people of England appreciate the monarchy, as I believe they do, it would be painful to them that their royal and representative family should not be maintained with becoming dignity, or fill in the public eye a position inferior to some of the noblest of the land. Nor will I insist upon what is unquestionably the fact, that the revenues of

the crown estates, on which our sovereign might live with as much right as the Duke of Bedford, or the Duke of Northumberland, has to his estates, are now paid into the public exchequer. All this, upon the present occasion, I am not going to insist upon. What I now say is this: that there is no sovereignty of any first-rate state which costs so little to the people as the sovereignty of England. I will not compare our civil list with those of European empires, because it is known that in amount they treble and quadruple it; but I will compare it with the cost of sovereignty in a republic, and that a republic with which you are intimately acquainted—the republic of the United States of America.

Gentlemen, there is no analogy between the position of our sovereign, Queen Victoria, and that of the President of the United States. The President of the United States is not the sovereign of the United States. There is a very near analogy between the position of the President of the United States and that of the Prime Minister of England, and both are paid at much the same rate—the income of a second-class professional man. The sovereign of the United States is the people; and I will now show you what the sovereignty of the United States costs. Gentlemen, you are aware of the constitution of the United States. There are thirty-seven independent States, each with a sovereign Legislature. Besides these, there is a confederation of States, to conduct their external affairs, which consists of the House of Representatives and a Senate. There are two hundred and eighty-five members of the House of Representatives, and there are seventy-four members of the Senate, making altogether three hundred and fifty-nine members of Congress. Now each

member of Congress receives £1,000 sterling per annum. In addition to this he receives an allowance called "mileage," which varies according to the distance which he travels, but the aggregate cost of which is about £80,000 per annum. That makes £889,000, almost the exact amount of our civil list.

But this, gentlemen, will allow you to make only a very imperfect estimate of the cost of sovereignty in the United States. Every member of every Legislature in the thirty-seven States is also paid. There are, I believe, five thousand and ten members of State Legislatures, who receive about \$350 per annum each. As some of the returns are imperfect, the average which I have given of expenditure may be rather high, and therefore I have not counted the mileage, which is also universally allowed. Five thousand and ten members of State Legislatures at \$350 each make \$1,753,500, or £850,700 sterling a year. So you see, gentlemen, that the immediate expenditure for the sovereignty of the United States is between £700,000 and £800,000 a year. Gentlemen, I have not time to pursue this interesting theme, otherwise I could show that you have still but imperfectly ascertained the cost of sovereignty in a republic. But, gentlemen, I cannot resist giving out one further illustration.

The government of this country is considerably carried on by the aid of royal commissions. So great is the increase of public business that it would be probably impossible for a minister to carry on affairs without this assistance. The Queen of England can command for these objects the services of the most experienced statesmen, and men of the highest position in society. If necessary, she can summon to them distinguished scholars or men most celebrated in

science and in arts; and she receives from them services that are unpaid. They are only too proud to be described in the commission as her Majesty's "trusty councillors"; and if any member of these commissions performs some transcendent services, both of thought and of labor, he is munificently rewarded by a public distinction conferred upon him by the fountain of honor. .Gentlemen, the government of the United States has, I believe, not less availed itself of the services of commissions than the government of the United Kingdom; but in a country where there is no fountain of honor, every member of these commissions is paid.

Gentlemen, I trust I have now made some suggestions to you respecting the monarchy of England which at least may be so far serviceable that when we are separated they may not be altogether without advantage; and now, gentlemen, I would say something on the subject of the House of Lords. It is not merely the authority of the throne that is now disputed, but the character and the influence of the House of Lords that are held up by some to public disregard. Gentlemen, I shall not stop for a moment to offer you any proofs of the advantage of a second chamber; and for this reason. That subject has been discussed now for a century, ever since the establishment of the government of the United States, and all great authorities, American, German, French, Italian, have agreed in this, that a representative government is impossible without a second chamber. And it has been, especially of late, maintained by great political writers in all countries, that the repeated failure of what is called the French republic is mainly to be ascribed to its not having a second chamber.

But, gentlemen, however anxious foreign countries have

been to enjoy this advantage, that anxiety has only been equalled by the difficulty which they have found in fulfilling their object. How is a second chamber to be constituted? By nominees of the sovereign power? What influence can be exercised by a chamber of nominees? Are they to be bound by popular election? In what manner are they to be elected? If by the same constituency as the popular body, what claim have they, under such circumstances, to criticise or to control the decisions of that body? If they are to be elected by a more select body, qualified by a higher franchise, there immediately occurs the objection, why should the majority be governed by the minority? The United States of America were fortunate in finding a solution of this difficulty; but the United States of America had elements to deal with which never occurred before, and never probably will occur again, because they formed their illustrious Senate from materials that were offered them by the thirty-seven States. We, gentlemen, have the House of Lords, an assembly which has historically developed and periodically adapted itself to the wants and necessities of the times.

What, gentlemen, is the first quality which is required in a second chamber? Without doubt, independence. What is the best foundation of independence? Without doubt, property. The Prime Minister of England has only recently told you, and I believe he spoke quite accurately, that the average income of the members of the House of Lords is £20,000 per annum. Of course there are some who have more, and some who have less; but the influence of a public assembly, so far as property is concerned, depends upon its aggregate property, which, in the present case, is a revenue of £9,000,000 a year. But, gentlemen,

you must look to the nature of this property. It is visible property, and therefore it is responsible property, which every ratepayer in the room knows to his cost. But, gentlemen, it is not only visible property; it is, generally speaking, territorial property; and one of the elements of territorial property is, that it is representative. Now, for illustration, suppose—which God forbid!—there was no House of Commons, and any Englishman—I will take him from either end of the island—a Cumberland, or a Cornish man, finds himself aggrieved, the Cumbrian says: “This conduct I experience is most unjust. I know a Cumberland man in the House of Lords, the Earl of Carlisle or the Earl of Lonsdale; I will go to him; he will never see a Cumberland man ill-treated.” The Cornish man will say: “I will go to Lord of Port Eliot; his family have sacrificed themselves before this for the liberties of Englishmen, and he will get justice done me.”

But, gentlemen, the charge against the House of Lords is that the dignities are hereditary, and we are told that if we have a House of Peers they should be peers for life. There are great authorities in favor of this, and even my noble friend near me [Lord Derby], the other day, gave in his adhesion to a limited application of this principle. Now, gentlemen, in the first place, let me observe that every peer is a peer for life, as he cannot be a peer after his death; but some peers for life are succeeded in their dignities by their children. The question arises, who is most responsible—a peer for life whose dignities are not descendible, or a peer for life whose dignities are hereditary? Now, gentlemen, a peer for life is in a very strong position. He says: “Here I am; I have got power and I will exercise it.” I have no doubt that, on the whole, a

peer for life would exercise it for what he deemed was the public good. Let us hope that. But, after all, he might and could exercise it according to his own will. Nobody can call him to account; he is independent of everybody. But a peer for life whose dignities descend is in a very different position. He has every inducement to study public opinion, and, when he believes it just, to yield; because he naturally feels that if the order to which he belongs is in constant collision with public opinion, the chances are that his dignities will not descend to his posterity.

Therefore, gentlemen, I am not prepared myself to believe that a solution of any difficulties in the public mind on this subject is to be found by creating peers for life. I know there are some philosophers who believe that the best substitute for the House of Lords would be an assembly formed of ex-governors of colonies. I have not sufficient experience on that subject to give a decided opinion upon it. When the Muse of Comedy threw her frolic grace over society, a retired governor was generally one of the characters in every comedy; and the last of our great actors—who, by the way, was a great favorite at Manchester—Mr. Farren, was celebrated for his delineation of the character in question. Whether it be the recollection of that performance or not, I confess I am inclined to believe that an English gentleman—born to business, managing his own estate, administering the affairs of his county, mixing with all classes of his fellowmen, now in the hunting-field, now in the railway direction, unaffected, unostentatious, proud of his ancestors, if they have contributed to the greatness of our common country—is, on the whole, more likely to form a Senator agreeable to English opinion and English taste than any substitute that has yet been produced.

Gentlemen, let me make one observation more on the subject of the House of Lords before I conclude. There is some advantage in political experience. I remember the time when there was a similar outcry against the House of Lords, but much more intense and powerful; and, gentlemen, it arose from the same cause. A Liberal government had been installed in office, with an immense Liberal majority. They proposed some violent measures. The House of Lords modified some, delayed others, and some they threw out. Instantly there was a cry to abolish or to reform the House of Lords, and the greatest popular orator [Daniel O'Connell] that probably ever existed was sent on a pilgrimage over England to excite the people in favor of this opinion. What happened? That happened, gentlemen, which may happen to-morrow. There was a dissolution of Parliament. The great Liberal majority vanished. The balance of parties was restored. It was discovered that the House of Lords had behind them at least half of the English people. We heard no more cries for their abolition or their reform, and before two years more passed England was really governed by the House of Lords, under the wise influence of the Duke of Wellington and the commanding eloquence of Lyndhurst; and such was the enthusiasm of the nation in favor of the second chamber that at every public meeting its health was drunk, with the additional sentiment, for which we are indebted to one of the most distinguished members that ever represented the House of Commons: "Thank God, there is the House of Lords."

Gentlemen, you will, perhaps, not be surprised that, having made some remarks upon the monarchy and the House of Lords, I should say something respecting that House in which I have literally passed the greater part of

my life, and to which I am devotedly attached. It is not likely, therefore, that I should say anything to depreciate the legitimate position and influence of the House of Commons. Gentlemen, it is said that the diminished power of the throne and the assailed authority of the House of Lords are owing to the increased power of the House of Commons, and the new position which of late years, and especially during the last forty years, it has assumed in the English constitution. Gentlemen, the main power of the House of Commons depends upon its command over the public purse, and its control of the public expenditure; and if that power is possessed by a party which has a large majority in the House of Commons, the influence of the House of Commons is proportionately increased, and, under some circumstances, becomes more predominant. But, gentlemen, this power of the House of Commons is not a power which has been created by any reform act, from the days of Lord Grey, in 1832, to 1867. It is the power which the House of Commons has enjoyed for centuries, which it has frequently asserted and sometimes even tyrannically exercised. Gentlemen, the House of Commons represents the constituencies of England, and I am here to show you that no addition to the elements of that constituency has placed the House of Commons in a different position with regard to the throne and the House of Lords from that it has always constitutionally occupied.

Gentlemen, we speak now on this subject with great advantage. We recently have had published authentic documents upon this matter which are highly instructive. We have, for example, just published the census of Great Britain, and we are now in possession of the last registration of voters for the United Kingdom. Gentlemen, it appears

that by the census the population at this time is about 32,000,000. It is shown by the last registration that, after making the usual deductions for deaths, removals, double entries, and so on, the constituency of the United Kingdom may be placed at 2,200,000. So, gentlemen, it at once appears that there are 30,000,000 people in this country who are as much represented by the House of Lords as by the House of Commons, and who, for the protection of their rights, must depend upon them and the majesty of the throne. And now, gentlemen, I will tell you what was done by the last Reform Act.

Lord Grey, in his measure of 1832, which was no doubt a statesmanlike measure, committed a great, and for a time it appeared an irretrievable, error. By that measure he fortified the legitimate influence of the aristocracy, and accorded to the middle classes great and salutary franchises; but he not only made no provision for the representation of the working classes in the Constitution, but he absolutely abolished those ancient franchises which the working classes had peculiarly enjoyed and exercised from time immemorial. Gentlemen, that was the origin of Chartism, and of that electoral uneasiness which existed in this country more or less for thirty years.

The Liberal party, I feel it my duty to say, had not acted fairly by this question. In their adversity they held out hopes to the working classes, but when they had a strong government they laughed their vows to scorn. In 1848 there was a French revolution, and a republic was established. No one can have forgotten what the effect was in this country. I remember the day when not a woman could leave her house in London, and when cannon were planted on Westminster Bridge. When Lord Derby

became Prime Minister affairs had arrived at such a point that it was of the first moment that the question should be sincerely dealt with. He had to encounter great difficulties, but he accomplished his purpose with the support of a united party. And, gentlemen, what has been the result? A year ago there was another revolution in France, and a republic was again established of the most menacing character. What happened in this country? You could not get half a dozen men to assemble in a street and grumble. Why? Because the people had got what they wanted. They were content, and they were grateful.

But, gentlemen, the constitution of England is not merely a constitution in State, it is a constitution in Church and State. The wisest sovereigns and statesmen have ever been anxious to connect authority with religion—some to increase their power, some, perhaps, to mitigate its exercise. But the same difficulty has been experienced in effecting this union which has been experienced in forming a second chamber—either the spiritual power has usurped upon the civil, and established a sacerdotal society, or the civil power has invaded successfully the rights of the spiritual, and the ministers of religion have been degraded into stipendiaries of the State and instruments of the government. In England we accomplish this great result by an alliance between Church and State, between two originally independent powers. I will not go into the history of that alliance, which is rather a question for those archæological societies which occasionally amuse and instruct the people of this city. Enough for me that this union was made and has contributed for centuries to the civilization of this country. Gentlemen, there is the same assault against the Church of England and the union between the State and

the Church as there is against the monarchy and against the House of Lords. It is said that the existence of nonconformity proves that the Church is a failure. I draw from these premises an exactly contrary conclusion; and I maintain that to have secured a national profession of faith with the unlimited enjoyment of private judgment in matters spiritual, is the solution of the most difficult problem, and one of the triumphs of civilization.

It is said that the existence of parties in the Church also proves its incompetence. On that matter, too, I entertain a contrary opinion. Parties have always existed in the Church; and some have appealed to them as arguments in favor of its divine institution, because, in the services and doctrines of the Church have been found representatives of every mood in the human mind. Those who are influenced by ceremonies find consolation in forms which secure to them the beauty of holiness. Those who are not satisfied except with enthusiasm find in its ministrations the exaltation they require, while others who believe that the "anchor of faith" can never be safely moored except in the dry sands of reason find a religion within the pale of the Church which can boast of its irrefragable logic and its irresistible evidence.

Gentlemen, I am inclined sometimes to believe that those who advocate the abolition of the union between Church and State have not carefully considered the consequences of such a course. The Church is a powerful corporation of many millions of her Majesty's subjects, with a consummate organization and wealth which in its aggregate is vast. Restricted and controlled by the State, so powerful a corporation may be only fruitful of public advantage, but it becomes a great question what might be

the consequences of the severance of the controlling tie between these two bodies. The State would be enfeebled, but the Church would probably be strengthened. Whether that is a result to be desired is a grave question for all men. For my own part, I am bound to say that I doubt whether it would be favorable to the cause of civil and religious liberty. I know that there is a common idea that if the union between Church and State was severed, the wealth of the Church would revert to the State; but it would be well to remember that the great proportion of ecclesiastical property is the property of individuals. Take, for example, the fact that the great mass of Church patronage is patronage in the hands of private persons. That you could not touch without compensation to the patrons. You have established that principle in your late Irish bill, where there was very little patronage. And in the present state of the public mind on the subject, there is very little doubt that there would be scarcely a patron in England—irrespective of other aid the Church would receive—who would not dedicate his compensation to the spiritual wants of his neighbors.

It was computed some years ago that the property of the Church in this manner, if the union was terminated, would not be less than between £80,000,000 and £90,000,000, and since that period the amount of private property dedicated to the purposes of the Church has very largely increased. I therefore trust that when the occasion offers for the country to speak out, it will speak out in an unmistakable manner on this subject; and, recognizing the inestimable services of the Church, that it will call upon the government to maintain its union with the State. Upon this subject there is one remark I would make.

Nothing is more surprising to me than the plea on which the present outcry is made against the Church of England. I could not believe that in the nineteenth century the charge against the Church of England should be that churchmen, and especially the clergy, had educated the people. If I were to fix upon one circumstance more than another which redounded to the honor of churchmen, it is that they should fulfil this noble office; and, next to being "the stewards of divine mysteries," I think the greatest distinction of the clergy is the admirable manner in which they have devoted their lives and their fortunes to this greatest of national objects.

Gentlemen, you are well acquainted in this city with this controversy. It was in this city—I don't know whether it was not in this hall—that that remarkable meeting was held of the Nonconformists to effect important alterations in the Education Act, and you are acquainted with the discussion in Parliament which arose in consequence of that meeting. Gentlemen, I have due and great respect for the Nonconformist body. I acknowledge their services to their country, and though I believe that the political reasons which mainly called them into existence have entirely ceased, it is impossible not to treat with consideration a body which has been eminent for its conscience, its learning, and its patriotism; but I must express my mortification that, from a feeling of envy or of pique, the Nonconformist body, rather than assist the Church in its great enterprise, should absolutely have become the partisans of a merely secular education. I believe myself, gentlemen, that without the recognition of a superintending Providence in the affairs of this world all national education will be disastrous, and I feel confident

that it is impossible to stop at that mere recognition. Religious education is demanded by the nation generally and by the instincts of human nature. I should like to see the Church and the Nonconformists work together; but I trust, whatever may be the result, the country will stand by the Church in its efforts to maintain the religious education of the people. Gentlemen, I foresee yet trials for the Church of England; but I am confident in its future. I am confident in its future because I believe there is now a very general feeling that to be national it must be comprehensive. I will not use the word "broad," because it is an epithet applied to a system with which I have no sympathy. But I would wish churchmen, and especially the clergy, always to remember that in our "Father's home there are many mansions," and I believe that comprehensive spirit is perfectly consistent with the maintenance of formularies and the belief in dogmas without which I hold no practical religion can exist.

Gentlemen, I have now endeavored to express to you my general views upon the most important subjects that can interest Englishmen. They are subjects upon which, in my mind, a man should speak with frankness and clearness to his countrymen, and although I do not come down here to make a party speech, I am bound to say that the manner in which those subjects are treated by the leading subject of this realm is to me most unsatisfactory. Although the Prime Minister of England is always writing letters and making speeches, and particularly on these topics, he seems to me ever to send forth an "uncertain sound." If a member of Parliament announces himself a Republican, Mr. Gladstone takes the earliest opportunity of describing him as a "fellow-worker" in public life. If an inconsiderate

multitude calls for the abolition or reform of the House of Lords, Mr. Gladstone says that it is no easy task, and that he must think once or twice, or perhaps even thrice, before he can undertake it. If your neighbor, the member for Bradford, Mr. Miall, brings forward a motion in the House of Commons for the severance of Church and State, Mr. Gladstone assures Mr. Miall with the utmost courtesy that he believes the opinion of the House of Commons is against him, but that if Mr. Miall wishes to influence the House of Commons he must address the people out of doors; whereupon Mr. Miall immediately calls a public meeting, and alleges as its cause the advice he has just received from the Prime Minister.

But, gentlemen, after all, the test of political institutions is the condition of the country whose fortunes they regulate; and I do not mean to evade that test. You are the inhabitants of an island of no colossal size; which, geographically speaking, was intended by nature as the appendage of some continental empire—either of Gauls and Franks on the other side of the Channel, or of Teutons and Scandinavians beyond the German Sea. Such, indeed, and for a long period, was your early history. You were invaded; you were pillaged and you were conquered; yet amid all these disgraces and vicissitudes there was gradually formed that English race which has brought about a very different state of affairs. Instead of being invaded, your land is proverbially the only “inviolable land”—“the inviolable land of the sage and free.” Instead of being plundered, you have attracted to your shores all the capital of the world. Instead of being conquered, your flag floats on many waters, and your standard waves in either zone. It may be said that these achievements are due to the race

that inhabited the land, and not to its institutions. Gentlemen, in political institutions are the embodied experiences of a race. You have established a society of classes which give vigor and variety to life. But no class possesses a single exclusive privilege, and all are equal before the law. You possess a real aristocracy, open to all who desire to enter it. You have not merely a middle class, but a hierarchy of middle classes, in which every degree of wealth, refinement, industry, energy, and enterprise is duly represented.

And now, gentlemen, what is the condition of the great body of the people? In the first place, gentlemen, they have for centuries been in the full enjoyment of that which no other country in Europe has ever completely attained—complete rights of personal freedom. In the second place, there has been a gradual, and therefore a wise, distribution on a large scale of political rights. Speaking with reference to the industries of this great part of the country, I can personally contrast it with the condition of the working classes forty years ago. In that period they have attained two results—the raising of their wages and the diminution of their toil. Increased means and increased leisure are the two civilizers of man. That the working classes of Lancashire and Yorkshire have proved not unworthy of these boons may be easily maintained; but their progress and elevation have been during this interval wonderfully aided and assisted by three causes, which are not so distinctively attributable to their own energies. The first is the revolution in locomotion, which has opened the world to the working man, which has enlarged the horizon of his experience, increased his knowledge of nature and of art, and added immensely to the salutary recreation, amusement, and

pleasure of his existence. The second cause is the cheap postage, the moral benefits of which cannot be exaggerated. And the third is that unshackled press which has furnished him with endless sources of instruction, information, and amusement.

Gentlemen, if you would permit me, I would now make an observation upon another class of the laboring population. This is not a civic assembly, although we meet in a city. That was for convenience, but the invitation which I received was to meet the county and all the boroughs of Lancashire; and I wish to make a few observations upon the condition of the agricultural laborer. That is a subject which now greatly attracts public attention. And, in the first place, to prevent any misconception, I beg to express my opinion that an agricultural laborer has as much right to combine for the bettering of his condition as a manufacturing laborer or a worker in metals. If the causes of his combination are natural—that is to say, if they arise from his own feelings and from the necessities of his own condition—the combination will end in results mutually beneficial to employers and employed. If, on the other hand, it is factitious and he is acted upon by extraneous influences and extraneous ideas, the combination will produce, I fear, much loss and misery both to employers and employed; and after a time he will find himself in a similar, or in a worse, position.

Gentlemen, in my opinion, the farmers of England cannot, as a body, afford to pay higher wages than they do, and those who will answer me by saying that they must find their ability by the reduction of rents are, I think, involving themselves with economic laws which may prove too difficult for them to cope with. The profits of a farmer

are very moderate. The interest upon capital invested in land is the smallest that any property furnishes. The farmer will have his profits and the investor in land will have his interest, even though they may be obtained at the cost of changing the mode of the cultivation of the country. Gentlemen, I should deeply regret to see the tillage of this country reduced, and a recurrence to pasture take place. I should regret it principally on account of the agricultural laborers themselves. Their new friends call them Hodge, and describe them as a stolid race. I must say that, from my experience of them, they are sufficiently shrewd and open to reason. I would say to them with confidence, as the great Athenian said to the Spartan who rudely assailed him: “Strike, but hear me.”

First, a change in the cultivation of the soil of this country would be very injurious to the laboring class; and second, I am of opinion that that class, instead of being stationary, has made, if not as much progress as the manufacturing class, very considerable progress during the last forty years. Many persons write and speak about the agricultural laborer with not so perfect a knowledge of his condition as is desirable. They treat him always as a human being who in every part of the country finds himself in an identical condition. Now, on the contrary, there is no class of laborers in which there is greater variety of condition than that of the agricultural laborers. It changes from north to south, from east to west, and from county to county. It changes even in the same county, where there is an alteration of soil and of configuration. The hind in Northumberland is in a very different condition from the famous Dorsetshire laborer; the tiller of the soil in Lincolnshire is different from his fellow-agriculturalist in Sussex. What the effect

of manufactures is upon the agricultural districts in their neighborhood it would be presumption in me to dwell upon; your own experience must tell you whether the agricultural laborer in North Lancashire, for example, has had no rise in wages and no diminution in toil. Take the case of the Dorsetshire laborer—the whole of the agricultural laborers on the southwestern coast of England for a very long period worked only half the time of the laborers in other parts of England, and received only half the wages. In the experience of many, I dare say, who are here present, even thirty years ago a Dorsetshire laborer never worked after three o'clock in the day; and why? Because the whole of that part of England was demoralized by smuggling. No one worked after three o'clock in the day, for a very good reason—because he had to work at night. No farmer allowed his team to be employed after three o'clock, because he reserved his horses to take his illicit cargo at night and carry it rapidly into the interior. Therefore, as the men were employed and remunerated otherwise, they got into a habit of half work and half play so far as the land was concerned, and when smuggling was abolished—and it has only been abolished for thirty years—these imperfect habits of labor continued, and do even now continue to a great extent. That is the origin of the condition of the agricultural laborer in the southwestern part of England.

But now, gentlemen, I want to test the condition of the agricultural laborer generally; and I will take a part of England with which I am familiar, and can speak as to the accuracy of the facts—I mean the group described as the south-midland counties. The conditions of labor there are the same, or pretty nearly the same, throughout. The group may be described as a strictly agricultural com-

munity, and they embrace a population of probably a million and a half. Now, I have no hesitation in saying that the improvement in their lot during the last forty years has been progressive and is remarkable. I attribute it to three causes. In the first place, the rise in their money wages is no less than fifteen per cent. The second great cause of their improvement is the almost total disappearance of excessive and exhausting toil, from the general introduction of machinery. I don't know whether I could get a couple of men who could or, if they could, would thresh a load of wheat in my neighborhood. The third great cause which has improved their condition is the very general, not to say universal, institution of allotment grounds. Now, gentlemen, when I find that this has been the course of affairs in our very considerable and strictly agricultural portion of the country, where there have been no exceptional circumstances, like smuggling, to degrade and demoralize the race, I cannot resist the conviction that the condition of the agricultural laborers, instead of being stationary, as we are constantly told by those not acquainted with them, has been one of progressive improvement, and that in those counties—and they are many—where the stimulating influence of a manufacturing neighborhood acts upon the land, the general conclusion at which I arrive is that the agricultural laborer has had his share in the advance of national prosperity. Gentlemen, I am not here to maintain that there is nothing to be done to increase the well-being of the working classes of this country, generally speaking. There is not a single class in the country which is not susceptible of improvement; and that makes the life and animation of our society. But in all we do we must remember, as my noble friend told them at Liverpool, that

much depends upon the working classes themselves; and what I know of the working classes in Lancashire makes me sure that they will respond to this appeal. Much, also, may be expected from that sympathy between classes which is a distinctive feature of the present day; and, in the last place, no inconsiderable results may be obtained by judicious and prudent legislation. But, gentlemen, in attempting to legislate upon social matters, the great object is to be practical—to have before us some distinct aims and some distinct means by which they can be accomplished.

Gentlemen, I think public attention as regards these matters ought to be concentrated upon sanitary legislation. That is a wide subject, and, if properly treated, comprises almost every consideration which has a just claim upon legislative interference. Pure air, pure water, the inspection of unhealthy habitations, the adulteration of food—these and many kindred matters may be legitimately dealt with by the legislature; and I am bound to say the legislature is not idle upon them; for we have at this time two important measures before Parliament on the subject. One—by a late colleague of mine, Sir Charles Adderley—is a large and comprehensive measure, founded upon a sure basis, for it consolidates all existing public acts, and improves them. A prejudice has been raised against that proposal, by stating that it interferes with the private acts of the great towns. I take this opportunity of contradicting that. The bill of Sir Charles Adderley does not touch the acts of the great towns. It only allows them, if they think fit, to avail themselves of its new provisions.

The other measure by the government is of a partial character. What it comprises is good, so far as it goes, but it shrinks from that bold consolidation of existing

acts which I think one of the great merits of Sir Charles Adderley's bill, which permits us to become acquainted with how much may be done in favor of sanitary improvement by existing provisions. Gentlemen, I cannot impress upon you too strongly my conviction of the importance of the legislature and society uniting together in favor of these important results. A great scholar and a great wit, three hundred years ago, said that, in his opinion, there was a great mistake in the Vulgate, which, as you all know, is the Latin translation of the Holy Scriptures, and that, instead of saying “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity”—

Vanitas vanitatum, omnia vanitas—the wise and witty king really said: “*Sanitas sanitatum, omnia sanitas.*” Gentlemen, it is impossible to overrate the importance of the subject. After all, the first consideration of a minister should be the health of the people. A land may be covered with historic trophies, with museums of science and galleries of art, with universities and with libraries; the people may be civilized and ingenious; the country may be even famous in the annals and action of the world, but, gentlemen, if the population every ten years decreases, and the stature of the race every ten years diminishes, the history of that country will soon be the history of the past.

Gentlemen, I said I had not come here to make a party speech. I have addressed you upon subjects of grave, and I will venture to believe of general, interest; but to be here and altogether silent upon the present state of public affairs would not be respectful to you, and, perhaps, on the whole, would be thought incongruous. Gentlemen, I cannot pretend that our position either at home or abroad is in my opinion satisfactory. At home, at a period of immense prosperity, with a people contented and naturally loyal,

we find to our surprise the most extravagant doctrines professed and the fundamental principles of our most valuable institutions impugned, and that, too, by persons of some authority. Gentlemen, this startling inconsistency is accounted for, in my mind, by the circumstances under which the present administration was formed. It is the first instance in my knowledge of a British administration being avowedly formed on a principle of violence. It is unnecessary for me to remind you of the circumstances which preceded the formation of that government. You were the principal scene and theatre of the development of statesmanship that then occurred. You witnessed the incubation of the portentous birth. You remember when you were informed that the policy to secure the prosperity of Ireland and the content of Irishmen was a policy of sacrilege and confiscation. Gentlemen, when Ireland was placed under the wise and able administration of Lord Abercorn, Ireland was prosperous, and I may say content. But there happened at that time a very peculiar conjuncture in politics. The Civil War in America had just ceased; and a band of military adventurers—Poles, Italians, and many Irishmen—concocted in New York a conspiracy to invade Ireland, with the belief that the whole country would rise to welcome them. How that conspiracy was baffled—how those plots were confounded, I need not now remind you. For that we were mainly indebted to the eminent qualities of a great man who has just left us. You remember how the constituencies were appealed to to vote against the government which had made so unfit an appointment as that of Lord Mayo to the viceroyalty of India. It was by his great qualities when Secretary for Ireland, by his vigilance, his courage,

his patience, and his perseverance that this conspiracy was defeated. Never was a Minister better informed. He knew what was going on at New York just as well as what was going on in the city of Dublin.

When the Fenian conspiracy had been entirely put down, it became necessary to consider the policy which it was expedient to pursue in Ireland; and it seemed to us at that time that what Ireland required after all the excitement which it had experienced was a policy which should largely develop its material resources. There were one or two subjects of a different character, which, for the advantage of the State, it would have been desirable to have settled, if that could have been effected with a general concurrence of both the great parties in that country. Had we remained in office, that would have been done. But we were destined to quit it, and we quitted it without a murmur. The policy of our successors was different. Their specific was to despoil churches and plunder landlords, and what has been the result? Sedition rampant, treason thinly veiled, and whenever a vacancy occurs in the representation a candidate is returned pledged to the disruption of the realm. Her Majesty's new Ministers proceeded in their career like a body of men under the influence of some delirious drug. Not satiated with the spoliation and anarchy of Ireland, they began to attack every institution and every interest, every class and calling in the country.

It is curious to observe their course. They took into hand the army. What have they done? I will not comment on what they have done. I will historically state it, and leave you to draw the inference. So long as constitutional England has existed there has been a jealousy among

all classes against the existence of a standing army. As our empire expanded, and the existence of a large body of disciplined troops became a necessity, every precaution was taken to prevent the danger to our liberties which a standing army involved.

It was a first principle not to concentrate in the island any overwhelming number of troops, and a considerable portion was distributed in the colonies. Care was taken that the troops generally should be officered by a class of men deeply interested in the property and the liberties of England. So extreme was the jealousy that the relations between that once constitutional force, the militia, and the sovereign were rigidly guarded, and it was carefully placed under local influences. All this is changed. We have a standing army of large amount, quartered and brigaded and encamped permanently in England, and fed by a considerable and constantly increasing reserve.

It will in due time be officered by a class of men eminently scientific, but with no relations necessarily with society; while the militia is withdrawn from all local influences, and placed under the immediate command of the Secretary of War. Thus, in the nineteenth century, we have a large standing army established in England, contrary to all the traditions of the land, and that by a Liberal government, and with the warm acclamations of the Liberal party.

Let us look what they have done with the Admiralty. You remember, in this country especially, the denunciations of the profligate expenditure of the Conservative government, and you have since had an opportunity of comparing it with the gentler burden of Liberal estimates. The navy was not merely an instance of profligate expenditure, but of incompetent and inadequate management. A

great revolution was promised in its administration. A gentleman [Mr. Childers] almost unknown to English politics was strangely preferred to one of the highest places in the councils of her Majesty. He set to at his task with ruthless activity. The Consultative Council, under which Nelson had gained all his victories, was dissolved. The secretaryship of the Admiralty, an office which exercised a complete supervision over every division of that great department—an office which was to the Admiralty what the Secretary of State is to the kingdom—which, in the qualities which it required and the duties which it fulfilled, was rightly a stepping-stone to the Cabinet, as in the instances of Lord Halifax, Lord Herbert, and many others—was reduced to absolute insignificance. Even the office of Control, which of all others required a position of independence, and on which the safety of the navy mainly depended, was deprived of all its important attributes. For two years the Opposition called the attention of Parliament to these destructive changes, but Parliament and the nation were alike insensible. Full of other business, they could not give a thought to what they looked upon merely as captious criticism. It requires a great disaster to command the attention of England; and when the "Captain" was lost, and when they had the detail of the perilous voyage of the "Megara," then public indignation demanded a complete change in this renovating administration of the navy.

And what has occurred? It is only a few weeks since that in the House of Commons I heard the naval statement made by a new First Lord [Mr. Goschen], and it consisted only of the rescinding of all the revolutionary changes of his predecessor, the mischief of every one of which during the last two years has been pressed upon the attention of

Parliament and the country by that constitutional and necessary body, the Opposition. Gentlemen, it will not do for me—considering the time I have already occupied, and there are still some subjects of importance that must be touched—to dwell upon any of the other similar topics, of which there is a rich abundance. I doubt not there is in this hall more than one farmer who has been alarmed by the suggestion that his agricultural machinery should be taxed. I doubt not there is in this hall more than one publican who remembers that last year an act of Parliament was introduced to denounce him as a “sinner.” I doubt not there are in this hall a widow and an orphan who remember the profligate proposition to plunder their lonely heritage. But, gentlemen, as time advanced it was not difficult to perceive that extravagance was being substituted for energy by the government. The unnatural stimulus was subsiding. Their paroxysms ended in prostration. Some took refuge in melancholy, and their eminent chief alternated between a menace and a sigh. As I sat opposite the Treasury bench the ministers reminded me of one of those marine landscapes not very unusual on the coast of South America. You behold a range of exhausted volcanoes. Not a flame flickers on a single pallid crest. But the situation is still dangerous. There are occasional earthquakes, and ever and anon the dark rumbling of the sea.

But, gentlemen, there is one other topic on which I must touch. If the management of our domestic affairs has been founded upon a principle of violence, that certainly cannot be alleged against the management of our external relations. I know the difficulty of addressing a body of Englishmen on these topics. The very phrase “Foreign Affairs” makes an Englishman convinced that I am about to treat of sub-

jects with which he has no concern. Unhappily the relations of England to the rest of the world, which are "Foreign Affairs," are the matters which most influence his lot. Upon them depends the increase or reduction of taxation. Upon them depends the enjoyment or the embarrassment of his industry. And yet, though so momentous are the consequences of the mismanagement of our foreign relations, no one thinks of them till the mischief occurs and then it is found how the most vital consequences have been occasioned by mere inadvertence.

I will illustrate this point by two anecdotes. Since I have been in public life there has been for this country a great calamity and there is a great danger, and both might have been avoided. The calamity was the Crimean War. You know what were the consequences of the Crimean War: A great addition to your debt, an enormous addition to your taxation, a cost more precious than your treasure—the best blood of England. Half a million of men, I believe, perished in that great undertaking. Nor are the evil consequences of that war adequately described by what I have said. All the disorders and disturbances of Europe, those immense armaments that are an incubus on national industry and the great obstacle to progressive civilization, may be traced and justly attributed to the Crimean War. And yet the Crimean War need never have occurred.

When Lord Derby acceded to office, against his own wishes, in 1852, the Liberal party most unconstitutionally forced him to dissolve Parliament at a certain time by stopping the supplies, or at least by limiting the period for which they were voted. There was not a single reason to justify that course, for Lord Derby had only accepted office, having once declined it, on the renewed application

of his sovereign. The country, at the dissolution, increased the power of the Conservative party, but did not give to Lord Derby a majority, and he had to retire from power. There was not the slightest chance of a Crimean War when he retired from office; but the Emperor of Russia, believing that the successor of Lord Derby was no enemy to Russian aggression in the East, commenced those proceedings, with the result of which you are familiar. I speak of what I know, not of what I believe, but of what I have evidence in my possession to prove—that the Crimean War never would have happened if Lord Derby had remained in office.

The great danger is the present state of our relations with the United States. When I acceded to office I did so, so far as regarded the United States of America, with some advantage. During the whole of the Civil War in America both my noble friend near me and I had maintained a strict and fair neutrality. This was fully appreciated by the government of the United States, and they expressed their wish that with our aid the settlement of all differences between the two governments should be accomplished. They sent here a plenipotentiary, an honorable gentleman, very intelligent and possessing general confidence. My noble friend near me, with great ability, negotiated a treaty for the settlement of all these claims. He was the first minister who proposed to refer them to arbitration, and the treaty was signed by the American Government. It was signed, I think, on November 10, on the eve of the dissolution of Parliament. The borough elections that first occurred proved what would be the fate of the Ministry, and the moment they were known in America the American Government announced that Mr. Reverdy Johnson, the American Minister, had mistaken his instruc-

tions, and they could not present the treaty to the Senate for its sanction—the sanction of which there had been previously no doubt.

But the fact is that, as in the case of the Crimean War, it was supposed that our successors would be favorable to Russian aggression, so it was supposed that by the accession to office of Mr. Gladstone and a gentleman you know well, Mr. Bright, the American claims would be considered in a very different spirit. How they have been considered is a subject which, no doubt, occupies deeply the minds of the people of Lancashire. Now, gentlemen, observe this—the question of the Black Sea involved in the Crimean War, the question of the American claims involved in our negotiations with Mr. Johnson, are the two questions that have again turned up, and have been the two great questions that have been under the management of his government.

How have they treated them? Prince Gortschakoff, thinking he saw an opportunity, announced his determination to break from the Treaty of Paris, and terminate all the conditions hostile to Russia which had been the result of the Crimean War. What was the first movement on the part of our government is at present a mystery. This we know, that they selected the most rising diplomatist of the day and sent him to Prince Bismarck with a declaration that the policy of Russia, if persisted in, was war with England. Now, gentlemen, there was not the slightest chance of Russia going to war with England, and no necessity, as I shall always maintain, of England going to war with Russia. I believe I am not wrong in stating that the Russian Government was prepared to withdraw from the position they had rashly taken; but suddenly her Majesty's

Government, to use a technical phrase, threw over the plenipotentiary, and, instead of threatening war, if the Treaty of Paris were violated, agreed to arrangements by which the violation of that treaty should be sanctioned by England, and, in the form of a congress, showed themselves guaranteeing their own humiliation. That Mr. Odo Russell made no mistake is quite obvious, because he has since been selected to be her Majesty's ambassador at the most important court of Europe. Gentlemen, what will be the consequence of this extraordinary weakness on the part of the British Government it is difficult to foresee. Already we hear that Sebastopol is to be refortified, nor can any man doubt that the entire command of the Black Sea will soon be in the possession of Russia. The time may not be distant when we may hear of the Russian power in the Persian Gulf, and what effect that may have upon the dominions of England and upon those possessions on the productions of which you every year more and more depend, are questions upon which it will be well for you on proper occasions to meditate.

I come now to that question which most deeply interests you at this moment, and that is our relations with the United States. I approved the government referring this question to arbitration. It was only following the policy of Lord Stanley. My noble friend disapproved the negotiations being carried on at Washington. I confess that I would willingly have persuaded myself that this was not a mistake, but reflection has convinced me that my noble friend was right. I remember the successful negotiation of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty by Sir Henry Bulwer. I flattered myself that treaties at Washington might be successfully negotiated; but I agree with my noble friend that

his general view was far more sound than my own. But no one, when that commission was sent forth, for a moment could anticipate the course of its conduct under the strict injunctions of the government. We believed that commission was sent to ascertain what points should be submitted to arbitration, to be decided by the principles of the law of nations. We had not the slightest idea that that commission was sent with power and instructions to alter the law of nations itself. When that result was announced, we expressed our entire disapprobation; and yet, trusting to the representations of the government that matters were concluded satisfactorily, we had to decide whether it were wise, if the great result was obtained, to wrangle upon points, however important, such as those to which I have referred.

Gentlemen, it appears that, though all parts of England were ready to make those sacrifices, the two negotiating states—the government of the United Kingdom and the government of the United States—placed a different interpretation upon the treaty when the time had arrived to put its provisions into practice. Gentlemen, in my mind, and in the opinion of my noble friend near me, there was but one course to take under the circumstances, painful as it might be, and that was at once to appeal to the good feeling and good sense of the United States, and, stating the difficulty, to invite confidential conference whether it might not be removed. But her Majesty's Government took a different course. On December 15, her Majesty's government were aware of a contrary interpretation being placed on the Treaty of Washington by the American Government. The Prime Minister received a copy of their counter case, and he confessed he had never read

it. He had a considerable number of copies sent to him to distribute among his colleagues, and you remember, probably, the remarkable statement in which he informed the House that he had distributed those copies to everybody except those for whom they were intended.

Time went on, and the adverse interpretation of the American Government oozed out, and was noticed by the press. Public alarm and public indignation were excited; and it was only seven weeks afterward, on the very eve of the meeting of Parliament—some twenty-four hours before the meeting of Parliament—that her Majesty's Government felt they were absolutely obliged to make a "friendly communication" to the United States that they had arrived at an interpretation of the treaty the reverse of that of the American Government. What was the position of the American Government? Seven weeks had passed without their having received the slightest intimation from her Majesty's Ministers. They had circulated their case throughout the world. They had translated it into every European language. It had been sent to every court and cabinet, to every sovereign and prime minister. It was impossible for the American Government to recede from their position, even if they had believed it to be an erroneous one. And then, to aggravate the difficulty, the Prime Minister goes down to Parliament, declares that there is only one interpretation to be placed on the treaty, and defies and attacks everybody who believes it susceptible of another.

Was there ever such a combination of negligence and blundering? And now, gentlemen, what is about to happen? All we know is that her Majesty's Ministers are doing everything in their power to evade the cognizance

and criticism of Parliament. They have received an answer to their “friendly communication”; of which, I believe, it has been ascertained that the American Government adhere to their interpretation; and yet they prolong the controversy. What is about to occur it is unnecessary for one to predict; but if it be this—if after a fruitless ratiocination worthy of a Schoolman, we ultimately agree so far to the interpretation of the American Government as to submit the whole case to arbitration, with feeble reservation of a protest, if it be decided against us, I venture to say that we shall be entering on a course not more distinguished by its feebleness than by its impending peril. There is before us every prospect of the same incompetence that distinguished our negotiations respecting the independence of the Black Sea; and I fear that there is every chance that this incompetence will be sealed by our ultimately acknowledging these direct claims of the United States, which, both as regards principle and practical results, are fraught with the utmost danger to this country. Gentlemen, don’t suppose, because I counsel firmness and decision at the right moment, that I am of that school of statesmen who are favorable to a turbulent and aggressive diplomacy. I have resisted it during a great part of my life. I am not unaware that the relations of England to Europe have undergone a vast change during the century that has just elapsed. The relations of England to Europe are not the same as they were in the days of Lord Chatham or Frederick the Great. The Queen of England has become the sovereign of the most powerful of Oriental States. On the other side of the globe there are now establishments belonging to her, teeming with wealth and population, which will, in due time, exercise their influence over the distribution of power. The old establishments of this

country, now the United States of America, throw their lengthening shades over the Atlantic, which mix with European waters. These are vast and novel elements in the distribution of power. I acknowledge that the policy of England with respect to Europe should be a policy of reserve, but proud reserve; and in answer to those statesmen—those mistaken statesmen—who have intimated the decay of the power of England and the decline of its resources, I express here my confident conviction that there never was a moment in our history when the power of England was so great and her resources so vast and inexhaustible.

And yet, gentlemen, it is not merely our fleets and armies, our powerful artillery, our accumulated capital, and our unlimited credit on which I so much depend, as upon that unbroken spirit of her people, which I believe was never prouder of the imperial country to which they belong. Gentlemen, it is to that spirit that I above all things trust. I look upon the people of Lancashire as fairly representative of the people of England. I think the manner in which they have invited me here, locally a stranger, to receive the expression of their cordial sympathy, and only because they recognize some effort on my part to maintain the greatness of their country, is evidence of the spirit of the land. I must express to you again my deep sense of the generous manner in which you have welcomed me, and in which you have permitted me to express to you my views upon public affairs. Proud of your confidence, and encouraged by your sympathy, I now deliver to you, as my last words, the cause of the Tory party, of the English Constitution, and of the British Empire.

GLADSTONE

WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE was born in 1809 in Liverpool, where his father, a native of Scotland, had become an opulent merchant, and had also acquired large interests in the British West Indies. The boy William was sent to Eton, and afterward to Christ Church, Oxford, where he took a double first-class. At the same time he so distinguished himself as a ready and forceful speaker in the Oxford Union Debating Society that he received from the Duke of Newcastle, the father of his college friend, Lord Lincoln, the offer of a seat in the House of Commons for the borough of Newark. He entered Parliament as an extreme Conservative, and for a considerable time was known as "the rising hope of the stern and unbending Tories." He supported Sir Robert Peel, however, when the latter determined to renounce the protectionist policy of the Conservative party, and to repeal the Corn Laws. He remained what was known as a Peelite for many years thereafter, and as lately as 1858 accepted from a Conservative administration the appointment of Lord High Commissioner to the Ionian Islands. Subsequently he became a colleague of Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, and ultimately became Prime Minister as leader of the Liberal party. When the Liberals were beaten in 1874 he announced his intention of retiring from public life, and during the Beaconsfield Parliament, which lasted until 1880, Lord Hartington was recognized as chief of the Liberal Opposition. When Lord Beaconsfield was beaten at the ballot-box, however, the almost unanimous demand of the Liberal party compelled the return of Mr. Gladstone to power, and he again became Prime Minister, retaining office until the spring of 1885. At the general election held in December of that year the Liberals and Irish Home Rulers between them commanded a large majority of the House of Commons, and Gladstone again was made Prime Minister. He now introduced the project of self-government for Ireland, which is known as the first Home Rule bill, but owing to the secession of the so-called Unionist-Liberals, it was beaten in the House of Commons, and as the Conservatives triumphed in the succeeding general election, Gladstone gave place to Lord Salisbury. He was once more returned to office, nevertheless, in 1892 with a majority of 40 in the House of Commons, and succeeded in carrying through that body his second Home Rule bill, which differed considerably from the first. The measure was beaten, however, in the House of Lords, and Gladstone soon afterward resigned the post of Premier, being succeeded by Lord Rosebery. He died in 1898. We here reproduce the remarkable speeches upon Ireland which he delivered in 1886 and in the years immediately following.

THE GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND BILL¹

HOUSE OF COMMONS, APRIL 8, 1886

I COULD have wished, Mr. Speaker, on several grounds, that it had been possible for me on this single occasion to open to the House the whole of the policy and intentions of the government with respect to Ireland. The two questions of land and of Irish government are, in our view, closely and inseparably connected, for they are the two channels through which we hope to find access, and effectual access, to that question which is the most vital of all—namely, the question of social order in Ireland. As I have said, those two questions are, in our view—whatever they may be in that of any one else—they are in our view, for reasons which I cannot now explain, inseparable the one from the other. But it is impossible for me to attempt such a task. Even as it is, the mass of materials that I have before me I may, without exaggeration, call enormous. I do not know that at any period a task has been laid upon me involving so large and so diversified an exposition, and it would be in vain to attempt more than human strength can, I think, suffice to achieve. I may say that, when contemplating the magnitude of that task, I have been filled with a painful mistrust; but that mistrust, I can assure the House, is absorbed in the yet deeper feeling of the responsibility that would lie upon me, and of the mischief that I should inflict upon the public interest, if I should fail to bring home to the minds of members, as

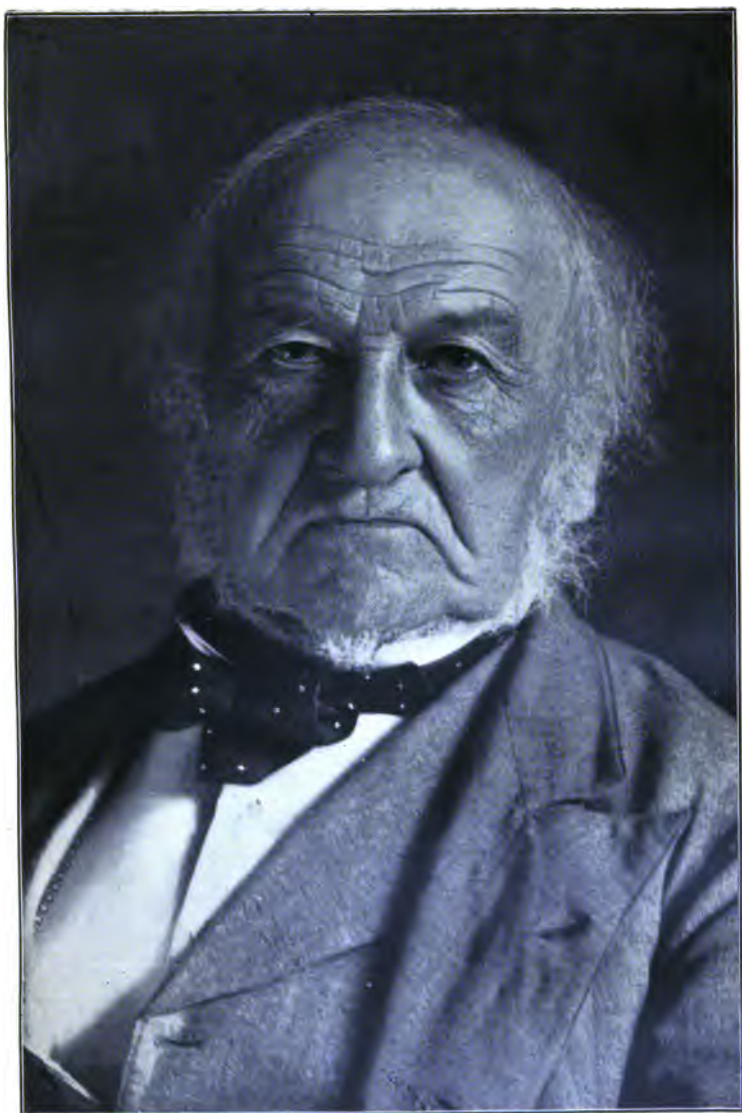
¹ The Government of Ireland Bill, generally known as the "Home Rule" Bill, passed its first reading on April 13th without a division after four nights' debate.

I seem to perceive in my own mind, the magnitude of all the varied aspects of this question. What I wish is that we should no longer fence and skirmish with this question, but that we should come to close quarters with it; that we should get if we can at the root; that we should take measures not merely intended for the wants of to-day and of to-morrow, but if possible that we should look into a more distant future; that we should endeavor to anticipate and realize the future by the force of reflection; that we should if possible unroll it in anticipation before our eyes, and make provision now, while there is yet time, for all the results that may await upon a right or wrong decision of to-day.

Mr. Speaker, on one point I rejoice to think that we have a material, I would say a vital, agreement. It is felt on both sides of the House, unless I am much mistaken, that we have arrived at a stage in our political transactions with Ireland, where two roads part one from the other, not soon probably to meet again. The late government—I am not now referring to this as a matter of praise or blame, but simply as a matter of fact—the late government felt that they had reached the moment for decisive resolution when they made the announcement, on the last day [January 26] of their ministerial existence, that their duty compelled them to submit to Parliament proposals for further repressive criminal legislation. We concur entirely in that conclusion, and we think that the time is come when it is the duty of Parliament, when the honor of Parliament and its duty alike require, that it should endeavor to come to some decisive resolution in this matter; and our intention is, sir, to propose to the House of Commons that which, as we

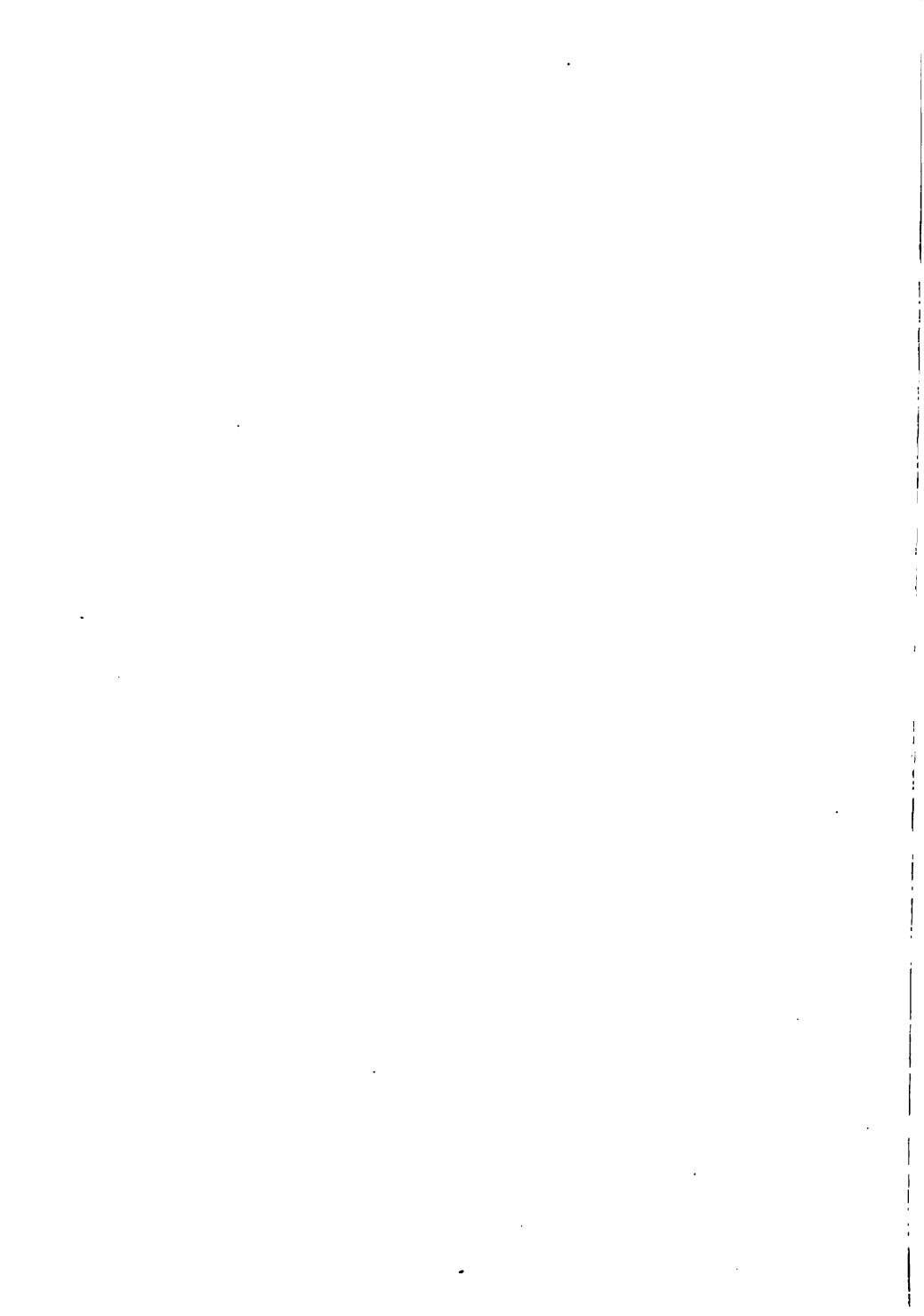
think, if happily accepted, will liberate Parliament from the restraints under which of late years it has ineffectually struggled to perform the business of the country; will restore legislation to its natural, ancient, unimpeded course; and will, above all, obtain an answer—a clear, we hope, and definite answer—to the question whether it is or is not possible to establish good and harmonious relations between Great Britain and Ireland on the footing of those free institutions to which Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen are alike unalterably attached.

Now, when I say that we are imperatively called upon to deal with the great subject of social order in Ireland, do not let me for a moment either be led myself or lead others into the dangerous fault of exaggeration. The crime of Ireland, the agrarian crime of Ireland, I rejoice to say, is not what it was in other days—days now comparatively distant, days within my own earliest recollection as a member of Parliament. In 1833 the government of Lord Grey proposed to Parliament a strong Coercion Act. At that time the information at their command did not distinguish between agrarian and ordinary crime as the distinction is now made. As to the present time, it is easy to tell the House that the serious agrarian crimes of Ireland, which in 1881 were 994, in 1885 were 239. But I go back to the period of 1832. The contrast is, perhaps, still more striking. In 1832 the homicides in Ireland were 248, in 1885 they were 65. The cases of attempts to kill, happily unfulfilled, in the first of those years were 209, in 1885 were 87. The serious offences of all other kinds in Ireland in 1832 were 6,014, in 1885 they were 1,057. The whole criminal offences in Ireland in the former years were 14,000, and in the latter year 2,683.



WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE

Orations—Vol. Five, p. 215



So far, therefore, sir, we are not to suppose that the case with which we have now to deal is one of those cases of extreme disorder which threaten the general peace of society. Notwithstanding that, sir, in order to lay the ground for the important measure we are asking leave to introduce—and well I am aware that it does require broad and solid grounds to be laid in order to justify the introduction of such a measure—in order to lay that ground, I must ask the House to enter with me into a brief review of the general features of what has been our course with regard to what is termed coercion, or repressive criminal legislation. And sir, the first point to which I would call your attention is this, that whereas exceptional legislation—legislation which introduces exceptional provisions into the law—ought itself to be in its own nature essentially and absolutely exceptional, it has become for us not exceptional but habitual. We are like a man who, knowing that medicine may be the means of his restoration to health, endeavors to live upon medicine. Nations, no more than individuals, can find a subsistence in what was meant to be a cure. But has it been a cure? Have we attained the object which we desired, and honestly desired, to attain? No, sir, agrarian crime has become, sometimes upon a larger and sometimes upon a smaller scale, as habitual in Ireland as the legislation which has been intended to repress it, and that agrarian crime, although at the present time it is almost at the low water-mark, yet has a fatal capacity of expansion under stimulating circumstances, and rises from time to time, as it rose in 1885, to dimensions and to an exasperation which becomes threatening to general social order, and to the peace of private and domestic life. I ought, perhaps, to supply an element which I forgot at the moment in com-

paring 1832 and 1885, that is to remind the House that the decrease of crime is not so great as it looks, because the population of Ireland at that time was nearly 8,000,000, whereas it may be taken at present at 5,000,000. But the exact proportion, I believe, is fairly represented by the figure I will now give. The population of Ireland now, compared with that time, is under two-thirds; the crime of Ireland now, as compared with that period, is under one-fifth.

But the agrarian crime in Ireland is not so much a cause as it is a symptom. It is a symptom of a yet deeper mischief of which it is only the external manifestation. That manifestation is mainly threefold. In the first place, with certain exceptions for the case of winter juries, it is impossible to depend in Ireland upon the finding of a jury in a case of agrarian crimes according to the facts as they are viewed by the government, by the judges, and by the public, I think, at large. That is a most serious mischief, passing down deep into the very groundwork of civil society. It is also, sir, undoubtedly a mischief that the cases where the extreme remedy of eviction is resorted to by the landlord—possibly in some instances unnecessarily resorted to, but in other instances resorted to after long patience has been exhausted—these cases of eviction, good, bad, and indifferent as to their justification, stand pretty much in one and the same discredit with the rural population of Ireland, and become, as we know, the occasion of transactions that we all deeply lament. Finally, sir, it is not to be denied that there is great interference in Ireland with individual liberty, in the shape of intimidation. Now, sir, I am not about to assume the tone of the Pharisee on

this occasion. There is a great deal of intimidation in England, too, when people find occasion for it; and if we, the English and the Scotch, were under the conviction that we had such grave cause to warrant irregular action, as is the conviction entertained by a very large part of the population in Ireland, I am not at all sure that we should not, like that part of the population in Ireland, resort to the rude and unjustifiable remedy of intimidation. I am very ambitious on this important and critical occasion to gain one object—that is, not to treat this question controversially. I have this object in view, and I do not despair of attaining it; and in order that I may do nothing to cause me to fail of attaining it, I will not enter into the question, if you like, whether there is ever intimidation in England or not. But I will simply record the fact, which I thought it but just to accompany with a confession with regard to ourselves—I will simply record the fact that intimidation does prevail, not to the extent that is supposed, yet to a material and painful extent, in Ireland. The consequence of that is to weaken generally the respect for law, and the respect for contract, and that among a people who, I believe, are as capable of attaining to the very highest moral and social standard as any people on the face of the earth. So much for coercion—if I use the phrase it is for brevity for repressive legislation generally—but there is one circumstance to which I cannot help drawing the special attention of the House.

Nothing has been more painful to me than to observe that in this matter we are not improving, but, on the contrary, we are losing ground. Since the last half century dawned, we have been steadily engaged in extending, as

well as in consolidating, free institutions. I divide the period since the Act of Union with Ireland into two—the first from 1800 to 1832, the epoch of what is still justly called the great Reform Act, and, secondly, from 1833 to 1885. I do not know whether it has been as widely observed as I think it deserves to be that in the first of those periods—thirty-two years—there were no less than eleven years—it may seem not much to say, but wait for what is coming—there were no less than eleven of those thirty-two years in which our statute book was free throughout the whole year from repressive legislation of an exceptional kind against Ireland. But in the fifty-three years since we advanced far in the career of Liberal principles and actions—in those fifty-three years, from 1833 to 1885—there were but two years which were entirely free from the action of this special legislation for Ireland. Is not that of itself almost enough to prove that we have arrived at the point where it is necessary that we should take a careful and searching survey of our position? For, sir, I would almost venture, trusting to the indulgent interpretation of the House, to say that the coercion we have heretofore employed has been spurious and ineffectual coercion, and that if there is to be coercion—which God forbid—it ought to be adequate to attain its end. If it is to attain its end it must be different, differently maintained, and maintained with a different spirit, courage, and consistency compared with the coercion with which we have been heretofore familiar.

Well, sir, what are the results that have been produced? This result above all—and now I come to what I consider to be the basis of the whole mischief—that rightly or wrongly, yet in point of fact, law is discredited in Ireland, and dis-

credited in Ireland upon this ground especially—that it comes to the people of that country with a foreign aspect, and in a foreign garb. These coercion bills of ours, of course; for it has become a matter of course—I am speaking of the facts and not of the merits—these coercion bills are stiffly resisted by the members who represent Ireland in Parliament. The English mind, by cases of this kind and by the tone of the press toward them, is estranged from the Irish people, and the Irish mind is estranged from the people of England and Scotland. I will not speak of other circumstances attending the present state of Ireland, but I do think that I am not assuming too much when I say that I have shown enough in this comparatively brief review—and I wish it could have been briefer still—to prove that if coercion is to be the basis for legislation we must no longer be seeking as we are always laudably seeking, to whittle it down almost to nothing at the very first moment we begin, but we must, like men, adopt it, hold by it, sternly enforce it till its end has been completely attained, with what results to peace, goodwill, and freedom I do not now stop to inquire. Our ineffectual and spurious coercion is morally worn out. I give credit to the late government for their conception of the fact. They must have realized it when they came to the conclusion in 1885 that they would not propose the renewal or continuance of repressive legislation. They were in a position in which it would have been comparatively easy for them to have proposed it, as a Conservative government following in the footsteps of a Liberal administration. But they determined not to propose it. I wish I could be assured that they and the party by whom they are supported were fully aware of the immense historic weight of that determination.

I have sometimes heard language used which appears to betoken an idea on the part of those who use it that this is a very simple matter—that, in one state of facts, they judged one way in July,¹ and that, in another state of facts, they judged another way in January;² and that consequently the whole ought to be effaced from the minds and memories of men. Depend upon it the effect of that decision of July never can be effaced—it will weigh, it will tell upon the fortunes and circumstances both of England and of Ireland. The return to the ordinary law, I am afraid, cannot be said to have succeeded.

Almost immediately after the lapse of the Crimes Act boycotting increased fourfold. Since that time it has been about stationary; but in October it had increased fourfold compared with what it was in the month of May. Well, now, if it be true that resolute coercion ought to take the place of irresolute coercion—if it be true that our system, such as I have exhibited it, has been—we may hide it from ourselves, we cannot hide it from the world—a failure in regard to repressive legislation, will that other coercion, which it is possible to conceive, be more successful? I can indeed conceive, and in history we may point to circumstances in which coercion of that kind, stern, resolute, consistent, might be, and has been, successful. But it requires, in my judgment, two essential conditions, and these are—the autocracy of government and the secrecy of public transactions. With those conditions that kind of coercion to which I am referring might possibly succeed. But will it succeed in the light of day, and can it be administered by

¹ When Lord Salisbury's administration which had just been formed decided not to propose the renewal of the "Crimes" Act.

² Soon after the general election.

the people of England and Scotland against the people of Ireland—by the two nations which, perhaps, above all others upon earth—I need hardly except America—best understand and are most fondly attached to the essential principles of liberty?

Now I enter upon another proposition to which I hardly expect broad exception can be taken. I will not assume—I will not beg—the question, whether the people of England and Scotland will ever administer that sort of effectual coercion which I have placed in contrast with our timid and hesitating repressive measures; but this I will say, that the people of England and Scotland will never resort to that alternative until they have tried every other. Have they tried every other? Well, some we have tried, to which I will refer. I have been concerned with some of them myself. But we have not yet tried every alternative, because there is one—not unknown to human experience—on the contrary, widely known to various countries in the world, where this dark and difficult problem has been solved by the comparatively natural and simple, though not always easy, expedient of stripping law of its foreign garb and investing it with a domestic character. I am not saying that this will succeed; I by no means beg the question at this moment; but this I will say—that Ireland, as far as I know, and speaking of the great majority of the people of Ireland, believes it will succeed, and that experience elsewhere supports that conclusion. The case of Ireland, though she is represented here not less fully than England or Scotland, is not the same as that of England or Scotland. England, by her own strength and by her vast majority in this House, makes her own laws just as independently as

if she were not combined with two other countries. Scotland—a small country, smaller than Ireland, but a country endowed with a spirit so masculine that never in the long course of history, excepting for two brief periods, each of a few years, was the superior strength of England such as to enable her to put down the national freedom beyond the border—Scotland, wisely recognized by England, has been allowed and encouraged in this House to make her own laws as freely and as effectually as if she had a representation six times as strong. The consequence is that the mainspring of law in England is felt by the people to be English, the mainspring of law in Scotland is felt by the people to be Scotch; but the mainspring of law in Ireland is not felt by the people to be Irish, and I am bound to say—truth extorts from me the avowal—that it cannot be felt to be Irish in the same sense as it is English and Scotch. The net results of this statement which I have laid before the House, because it was necessary as the groundwork of my argument, are these—In the first place, I admit it to be little less than a mockery to hold that the state of law and of facts conjointly which I have endeavored to describe conduces to the real unity of this great, noble, and world-wide empire. In the second place, something must be done, something is imperatively demanded from us, to restore to Ireland the first conditions of civil life—the free course of law, the liberty of every individual in the exercise of every legal right, the confidence of the people in the law and their sympathy with the law—apart from which no country can be called, in the full sense of the word, a civilized country, nor can there be given to that country the blessings which it is the object of civilized society to attain. Well, this is my introduction to

the task I have to perform; and now I ask attention to the problem we have before us.

It is a problem not unknown in the history of the world; it is really this—there can be no secret about it as far as we are concerned—how to reconcile Imperial unity with diversity of legislation. Mr. Grattan not only held these purposes to be reconcilable, but he did not scruple to go the length of saying this—"I demand the continued severance of the Parliaments with a view to the continued and everlasting unity of the empire." Was that a flight of rhetoric, an audacious paradox? No, it was the statement of a problem which other countries have solved, and under circumstances much more difficult than ours. We ourselves may be said to have solved it, for I do not think that any one will question the fact that, out of the last six centuries, for five centuries at least Ireland has had a Parliament separate from ours. That is a fact undeniable. Did that separation of Parliament destroy the unity of the British Empire? Did it destroy it in the eighteenth century? Do not suppose that I mean that harmony always prevailed between Ireland and England. We know very well there were causes quite sufficient to account for a recurrence of discord. But I take the eighteenth century alone. Can I be told that there was no unity of empire in the eighteenth century? Why, sir, it was the century which saw our navy come to its supremacy. It was the century which witnessed the foundation of that great gigantic manufacturing industry which now overshadows the whole world. It was, in a pre-eminent sense, the century of empire, and it was in a sense but too conspicuous the century of wars. Those wars were carried on, that empire was main-

tained and enormously enlarged, that trade was established, that navy was brought to supremacy when England and Ireland had separate parliaments. Am I to be told that there was no unity of empire in that state of things? Well, sir, what has happened elsewhere? Have any other countries had to look this problem in the face? The last half century—the last sixty or seventy years since the great war—has been particularly rich in its experience of this subject and in the lessons which it has afforded to us. There are many cases to which I might refer to show how practicable it is, or how practicable it has been found by others whom we are not accustomed to look upon as our political superiors—how practicable it has been found by others to bring into existence what is termed local autonomy, and yet not to sacrifice but to confirm Imperial unity.

Let us look to those two countries, neither of them very large, but yet countries which every Englishman and every Scotchman must rejoice to claim as his kin—I mean the Scandinavian countries of Sweden and Norway. Immediately after the great war in 1814 the Norwegians were ready to take sword in hand to prevent their coming under the domination of Sweden. But the Powers of Europe undertook the settlement of that question, and they united those countries upon a footing of strict legislative independence and co-equality. Now, I am not quoting this as an exact precedent for us, but I am quoting it as a precedent, and as an argument *à fortiori*, because I say they confronted much greater difficulties, and they had to put a far greater strain upon the unity of their country, than we can ever be called upon to put upon the unity of ours. The legislatures of Sweden and of Norway are absolutely independent. The

law even forbids what I hope never will happen between England and Ireland—that a Swede, if I am correct in my impression, should bear office of any kind in the Norwegian Ministry. There is no sort of supremacy or superiority in the legislature of Sweden over the legislature of Norway. The legislature of Norway has had serious controversies, not with Sweden, but with the King of Sweden, and it has fought out those controversies successfully upon the strictest constitutional and parliamentary grounds. And yet with two countries so united, what has been the effect? Not discord, not convulsions, not danger to peace, not hatred, not aversion, but a constantly growing sympathy; and every man who knows their condition knows that I speak the truth when I say that in every year that passes the Norwegians and the Swedes are more and more feeling themselves to be the children of a common country, united by a tie which never is to be broken.

I will take another case—the case of Austria and Hungary. In Austria and Hungary there is a complete duality of power. I will not enter upon the general condition of the Austrian Empire, or upon the other divisions and diversities which it includes, but I will take simply this case. At Vienna sits the Parliament of the Austrian monarchy; at Buda-Pesth sits the Parliament of the Hungarian crown; and that is the state of things which was established, I think, nearly twenty years ago. I ask all those who hear me whether there is one among them who doubts? Whether or not the condition of Austria be at this moment, or be not, perfectly solid, secure, and harmonious, after the enormous difficulties she has had to confront on account of the boundless diversity of race, whether or not that condition be perfectly normal in every minute

particular, this, at least, cannot be questioned, that it is a condition of solidity and of safety compared with the time when Hungary made war on her—war which she was unable to quell, when she owed the cohesion of the body politic to the interference of Russian arms; or in the interval that followed when there existed a perfect legislative union and a supreme imperial council sat in Vienna.

Now, I have quoted these illustrations as illustrations which show, not that what we are called upon to consider can be done, but that infinitely more can be done—has been done—under circumstances far less favorable. What was the state of Sweden and Norway—two small countries, Norway undoubtedly inferior in population, but still unassailable in her mountain fastnesses—what was the case of Sweden and Norway for bringing about a union by physical and material means? There were no means to be used but moral means, and those moral means have been completely successful. What again, was the case of Austria, where the seat of empire in the archduchy was associated not with the majority, but with the minority of the population, and where she had to face Hungary with numbers far greater than her own? Even there, while having to attempt what was infinitely more complex and more dangerous than even prejudice can suppose to be that which I am about to suggest, it is not to be denied that a great relative good and relative success have been attained. Our advantages are immense in a question of this kind. I do not know how many gentlemen who hear me have read the valuable work of Professor Dicey on the Law of the Constitution. No work that I have ever read brings out in a more distinct and emphatic manner the peculiarity of the British Constitution in one point, to which, perhaps, we

seldom have occasion to refer—namely, the absolute supremacy of Parliament. We have a Parliament to the power of which there are no limits whatever, except such as human nature, in a divinely ordained condition of things, imposes. We are faced by no co-ordinate legislatures, and are bound by no statutory conditions. There is nothing that controls us, and nothing that compels us, except our convictions of law, of right, and of justice. Surely that is a favorable point of departure in considering a question such as this.

I have referred to the eighteenth century. During that century you had beside you a co-ordinate legislature. The legislature of Ireland before the Union had the same title as that of Great Britain. There was no juridical distinction to be drawn between them. Even in point of antiquity they were as nearly as possible on a par, for the Parliament of Ireland had subsisted for 500 years. It had asserted its exclusive right to make laws for the people of Ireland. That right was never denied, for gentlemen ought to recollect, but all do not, perhaps, remember, that Poynings' law¹ was an Irish law imposed by Ireland on herself. That claim of the Parliament of Ireland never was denied until the reign of George I.,² and that claim denied in the reign of George I. was admitted in the reign of George III.³ The Parliament—the great Parliament of Great Britain—had to retract its words and to withdraw its claim, and the legislature which goes by the name of Grattan's Parliament was as independent in point of authority as any legislature over the wide world. We are not called upon to constitute another co-ordinate legislature. While I think it is right to

¹ 1494.² 1719.³ 1782.

modify the Union in some particulars, we are not about to propose its repeal.

What is the essence of the Union? That is the question. It is impossible to determine what is and what is not the repeal of the Union, until you settle what is the essence of the Union. Well, I define the essence of the Union to be this—that before the Act of Union there were two independent, separate, co-ordinate Parliaments; after the Act of Union there was but one. A supreme statutory authority of the Imperial Parliament over Great Britain, Scotland and Ireland, as one United Kingdom was established by the Act of Union. That supreme statutory authority it is not asked, so far as I am aware, and certainly it is not intended, in the slightest degree to impair. When I heard the honorable member for Cork,¹ in a very striking speech at the commencement of the session, ask for what I think he termed local autonomy or Irish autonomy, I felt that something was gained in the conduct of this great question. If he speaks, as I believe he speaks, the mind of the vast majority of the representatives of Ireland, I feel that we have no right to question for a moment, in this free country, under a representative system, that the vast majority of the representatives speak the mind of a decided majority of the people. I felt, sir, that something had been gained. Ireland had come a great way to meet us, and it was more than ever our duty to consider whether we could not go some way to meet her. The term dismemberment of the empire, as applied to anything that is now before us, is, in my judgment—I will not argue it at any length now—simply a misnomer. To speak, in connection with any medi-

¹ Mr. Parnell.

tated or possible plan, of the dismemberment of the empire or the disintegration of the empire is, in the face of the history of the eighteenth century, not merely a misnomer, but an absurdity. Some phrases have been used which I will not refer to, simply because I do not think that they quite accurately describe the case, and because they might open a door to new debate. We hear of national independence, we hear of legislative independence, we hear of an independent Parliament, and we hear of federal arrangements. These are not descriptions which I adopt or which I find it necessary to discuss.

Then again, under a sense of the real necessities of the case, there are gentlemen who have their own philanthropic, well-intended plans for meeting this emergency. There are those who say, "let us abolish the Castle"; and I think that gentlemen of very high authority, who are strongly opposed to giving Ireland a domestic legislature, have said, nevertheless, that they think there ought to be a general reconstruction of the administrative government in Ireland. Well, sir, I have considered that question much, and what I want to know is this—how, without a change in the legislature, without giving to Ireland a domestic legislature, there is to be, or there even can possibly be, a reconstruction of the administration. We have sent to Ireland to administer the actual system the best men we could find. When Lord Spencer undertook that office, he represented, not in our belief, merely, but in our knowledge—for we had known him long—the flower of the British aristocracy, that portion of the British aristocracy which to high birth and great influence of station unites a love of liberty and of the people as genuine as that which breathes

within any cottage in the land. And yet, sir, what is the result? The result is that, after a life of almost unexampled devotion to the public service in Ireland, Lord Spencer's administration not only does not command, which is easily understood, the adhesion and the commendation of the honorable member for Cork and his colleagues, but it is made the subject of cavil and of censure in this House of Parliament, and from the spot where I now stand, by members of the late Conservative government. I want to know—for we have not come to our conclusions without making careful examination of the conclusions of other people—I want to know how it is possible to construct an administrative system in Ireland without legislative change, and what gentlemen mean when they speak of the administrative system of Ireland. The fault of the administrative system of Ireland, if it has a fault, is simply this—that its spring and source of action, or, if I can use an anatomical illustration without a blunder, what is called the motor muscle is English and not Irish. Without providing a domestic legislature for Ireland, without having an Irish Parliament, I want to know how you will bring about this wonderful, superhuman, and, I believe, in this condition, impossible result, that your administrative system shall be Irish and not English.

There have been several plans liberally advised for granting to Ireland the management of her education, the management of her public works, and the management of one subject and another—boons very important in themselves—under a central elective body; boons any of which I do not hesitate to say I should have been glad to see them accepted, or I should have been glad to see a trial given to a system which might have been constructed

under them, had it been the desire and the demand of Ireland. I do not think such a scheme would have possessed the advantage of finality. If it had been accepted, and especially if it had been freely suggested from that quarter—by the Irish representatives—it might have furnished a useful *modus vivendi*. But it is absurd, in my opinion, to talk of the adoption of such a scheme in the face of two obstacles—first of all, that those whom it is intended to benefit do not want it, do not ask it, and refuse it; and, secondly, the obstacle, not less important, that all those who are fearful of giving a domestic legislature to Ireland would naturally and emphatically, and rather justly, say: “We will not create your central board and palter with this question, because we feel certain that it will afford nothing in this world except a stage from which to agitate for a further concession, and because we see that by the proposal you make you will not even attain the advantage of settling the question that is raised.”

Well, sir, what we seek is the settlement of that question; and we think that we find that settlement in the establishment, by the authority of Parliament, of a legislative body sitting in Dublin for the conduct of both legislation and administration under the conditions which may be prescribed by the act defining Irish, as distinct from imperial, affairs. There is the head and front of our offending. Let us proceed to examine the matter a little further. The essential conditions of any plan that Parliament can be asked or could be expected to entertain are, in my opinion, these—The unity of the empire must not be placed in jeopardy; the safety and welfare of the whole—if there is an unfortunate conflict, which I do not believe—the welfare and security of the whole must be preferred to the security and

advantage of the part. The political equality of the three countries must be maintained. They stand by statute on a footing of absolute equality, and that footing ought not to be altered or brought into question. There should be what I will at present term an equitable distribution of imperial burdens.

Next I introduce a provision which may seem to be exceptional, but which, in the peculiar circumstances of Ireland, whose history unhappily has been one long chain of internal controversies as well as of external difficulties, is necessary in order that there may be reasonable safeguards for the minority. I am asked why there should be safeguards for the minority. Will not the minority in Ireland, as in other countries, be able to take care of itself? Are not free institutions, with absolute publicity, the best security that can be given to any minority? I know, sir, that in the long run our experience shows they are. After we have passed through the present critical period, and obviated and disarmed, if we can, the jealousies with which any change is attended, I believe, as most gentlemen in this House may probably believe, that there is nothing comparable to the healthy action of free discussion, and that a minority asserting in the face of day its natural rights is the best security and guarantee for its retaining them. We have not reached that state of things. I may say, not entering into detail, there are three classes to whom we must look in this case. We must consider—I will not say more on that subject to-day—the class immediately connected with the land. A second question, not, I think, offering any great difficulty, relates to the civil service and the offices of the executive government in

Ireland. The third question relates to what is commonly called the Protestant minority, and especially that important part of the community which inhabits the province of Ulster, or which predominates in a considerable portion of the province of Ulster.

I will deviate from my path for a moment to say a word upon the state of opinion in that wealthy, intelligent, and energetic portion of the Irish community, which, as I have said, predominates in a certain portion of Ulster. Our duty is to adhere to sound general principles, and to give the utmost consideration we can to the opinions of that energetic minority. The first thing of all, I should say, is that if, upon any occasion, by any individual or section, violent measures have been threatened in certain emergencies, I think the best compliment I can pay to those who have threatened us is to take no notice whatever of the threats, but to treat them as momentary ebullitions, which will pass away with the fears from which they spring, and at the same time to adopt on our part every reasonable measure for disarming those fears. I cannot conceal the conviction that the voice of Ireland, as a whole, is at this moment clearly and constitutionally spoken. I cannot say it is otherwise when five-sixths of its lawfully-chosen representatives are of one mind in this matter. There is a counter voice; and I wish to know what is the claim of those by whom that counter voice is spoken, and how much is the scope and allowance we can give them. Certainly, sir, I cannot allow it to be said that a Protestant minority in Ulster, or elsewhere, is to rule the question at large for Ireland. I am aware of no constitutional doctrine tolerable on which such a conclusion could

be adopted or justified. But I think that the Protestant minority should have its wishes considered to the utmost practicable extent in any form which they may assume.

Various schemes, short of refusing the demand of Ireland at large, have been proposed on behalf of Ulster. One scheme is that Ulster itself, or, perhaps with more appearance of reason, a portion of Ulster, should be excluded from the operation of the bill we are about to introduce. Another scheme is that a separate autonomy should be provided for Ulster, or for a portion of Ulster. Another scheme is that certain rights with regard to certain subjects—such, for example, as education and some other subjects—should be reserved and should be placed to a certain extent under the control of provincial councils. These, I think, are the suggestions which have reached me in different shapes; there may be others. But what I wish to say of them is this—there is no one of them which has appeared to us to be so completely justified, either upon its merits or by the weight of opinion supporting and recommending it, as to warrant our including it in the bill and proposing it to Parliament upon our responsibility. What we think is that such suggestions deserve careful and unprejudiced consideration. It may be that that free discussion, which I have no doubt will largely take place after a bill such as we propose shall have been laid on the table of the House, may give to one of these proposals, or to some other proposals, a practicable form, and that some such plan may be found to be recommended by a general or predominating approval. If it should be so, it will, at our hands, have the most favorable consideration, with every disposition to do what equity may appear to recommend. That is what I have to say on the subject of Ulster.

I have spoken now of the essential conditions of a good plan for Ireland, and I add only this—that in order to be a good plan it must be a plan promising to be a real settlement of Ireland. To show that without a good plan you can have no real settlement, I may point to the fact that the great settlement of 1782 was not a real settlement. Most unhappily, sir, it was not a real settlement; and why was it not a real settlement? Was it Ireland that prevented it from being a real settlement? No, sir, it was the mistaken policy of England, listening to the pernicious voice and claims of ascendancy. It is impossible, however, not to say this word for the Protestant Parliament of Ireland. Founded as it was upon narrow suffrage, exclusive in religion, crowded with pensioners and place-holders holding every advantage, it yet had in it the spark, at least, and the spirit of true patriotism. It emancipated the Roman Catholics of Ireland when the Roman Catholics of England were not yet emancipated. It received Lord Fitzwilliam with open arms; and when Lord Fitzwilliam promoted to the best of his ability the introduction of Roman Catholics into Parliament, and when his brief career was unhappily intercepted by a peremptory recall from England, what happened? Why, sir, in both Houses of the Irish Parliament votes were at once passed by those Protestants, by those men, mixed as they were with so large an infusion of pensioners and of placemen, registering their confidence in that nobleman and desiring that he should still be left to administer the government of Ireland. What the Irish Parliament did when Lord Fitzwilliam was promoting the admission of Roman Catholics into Parliament justifies me in saying there was a spirit there which, if free scope had been left to it, would in all probability have been enabled

to work out a happy solution for every Irish problem and difficulty, and would have saved to the coming generation an infinity of controversy and trouble.

I pass on to ask how are we to set about the giving effect to the proposition I have made, to the purpose I have defined, of establishing in Ireland a domestic legislature to deal with Irish as contradistinguished from Imperial affairs? And here, sir, I am confronted at the outset by what we have felt to be a formidable dilemma. I will endeavor to state and to explain it to the House as well as I can. Ireland is to have a domestic legislature for Irish affairs. That is my postulate from which I set out. Are Irish members in this House, are Irish representative peers in the other House, still to continue to form part of the respective assemblies? That is the first question which meets us in consideration of the ground I have opened. Now I think it will be perfectly clear that if Ireland is to have a domestic legislature, Irish peers and Irish representatives cannot come here to control English and Scotch affairs. That I understand to be admitted freely. I never heard of their urging the contrary, and I am inclined to believe that it would be universally admitted. The one thing follows from the other. There cannot be a domestic legislature in Ireland dealing with Irish affairs, and Irish peers and Irish representatives sitting in Parliament at Westminster to take part in English and Scotch affairs. My next question is, Is it practicable for Irish representatives to come here for the settlement, not of English and Scotch, but of Imperial affairs? In principle it would be very difficult, I think, to object to that proposition. But then its acceptance depends entirely upon our arriving at the conclusion

that in this House we can draw for practical purposes a distinction between affairs which are Imperial and affairs which are not Imperial. It would not be difficult to say in principle that as the Irish legislature will have nothing to do with Imperial concerns let Irish members come here and vote on Imperial concerns. All depends on the practicability of the distinction. Well, sir, I have thought much, reasoned much, and inquired much, with regard to that distinction. I had hoped it might be possible to draw a distinction, and I have arrived at the conclusion that it cannot be drawn. I believe it passes the wit of man; at any rate it passes not my wit alone but the wit of many with whom I have communicated. It would be easy to exhibit a case; but the difficulty, I may say, in my opinion, arises from this. If this were a merely legislative House, or if the House of Lords were merely a legislative House—this House, of course, affords the best illustration—I do not think it would be difficult to draw a distinction. We are going to draw the distinction—we have drawn the distinction—in the Bill which I ask leave to lay on the table for legislative purposes with reference to what I hope will be the domestic legislature of Ireland. But this House is not merely a legislative House; it is a House controlling the Executive; and when you come to the control of the Executive, then your distinction between Imperial subjects and non-Imperial subjects totally breaks down—they are totally insufficient to cover the whole case.

For example, suppose it to be a question of foreign policy. Suppose the Irish members in this House coming here to vote on a question of foreign policy. Is it possible to deny that they would be entitled to take part in discussing an address to the crown for the dismissal of the foreign

minister? It is totally impossible to deny—it is totally impossible to separate—the right of impugning the policy of and the right of action against the minister. Well, sir, if on that account members might take part in an address dismissing the foreign minister, I want to know, considering the collective responsibility of government—a principle, I hope, which will always be maintained at the very highest level that circumstances will permit, for I am satisfied that the public honor and the public welfare are closely associated with it—if that be so, what will be the effect of the dismissal of the foreign minister on the existence and action of the government to which he belongs? Why, sir, the government in nineteen cases out of twenty will break down with the foreign minister; and when these gentlemen, coming here for the purpose of discussing Imperial questions alone, could dislodge the government which is charged with the entire interests of England and Scotland, I ask you what becomes of the distinction between Imperial and non-Imperial affairs? I believe the distinction to be impossible, and therefore I arrive at the next conclusion—that Irish members and Irish peers cannot, if a domestic legislature be given to Ireland, justly retain a seat in the Parliament at Westminster.

If Irish members do not sit in this House and Irish peers do not sit in the other House, how is Ireland to be taxed? I shall assume, as a matter of course, that we should propose that a general power of taxation should pass to the domestic legislature of Ireland. But there is one very important branch of taxation, involving, indeed, a second branch, which is susceptible of being viewed in a very different aspect from the taxes of Ireland generally.

I mean the duties of customs and duties of excise relatively to customs. One thing I take to be absolutely certain. Great Britain will never force upon Ireland taxation without representation. Well, sir, if we are never to force upon Ireland taxation without representation, then comes another question of the deepest practical interest—are we to give up the fiscal unity of the empire? I sometimes see it argued that, in giving up the fiscal unity of the empire, we should give up the unity of the empire. To that argument I do not subscribe. The unity of the empire rests upon the supremacy of Parliament and on considerations much higher than considerations merely fiscal. But I must admit that, while I cannot stand on the high ground of principle, yet on the very substantial ground of practice to give up the fiscal unity of the empire would be a very great public inconvenience and a very great public misfortune—a very great public misfortune for Great Britain; and I believe it would be a still greater misfortune for Ireland were the fiscal unity of the empire to be put to hazard and practically abandoned. I may say also, looking as I do with hope to the success of the measure I now propose, I, at any rate, feel the highest obligation not to do anything, not to propose anything, without necessity, that would greatly endanger the right comprehension of this subject by the people of England and Scotland, which might be the case were the fiscal unity of the empire to be broken.

There is the dilemma. I conceive that there is but one escape from it, and that is, if there were conditions upon which Ireland consented to such arrangements as would leave the authority of levying customs duties, and such

excise duties as are immediately connected with customs, in the hands of Parliament here, and would by her will consent to set our hands free to take the course that the general exigencies of the case appear to require. These conditions I take to be three—In the first place, that a general power of taxation over and above these particular duties should pass unequivocally into the hands of the domestic legislature of Ireland. In the second place, that the entire proceeds of the customs and excise should be held for the benefit of Ireland, for the discharge of the obligations of Ireland, and for the payment of the balance, after discharging those obligations, into an Irish exchequer, to remain at the free disposal of the Irish legislative body.

But there is another point which I think ought to engage, and may justly engage, the anxious attention in particular of the representatives of Ireland; and it is this:—The proposal which I have now sketched is that we should pass an act giving to Ireland what she considers an enormous boon, under the name of a Statutory Parliament for the control of Irish affairs, both legislative and administrative. But one of the provisions of that act is the withdrawal of Irish representative peers from the House of Lords, and Irish members from the House of Commons. Well, then, I think it will naturally occur to the Irish, as it would in parallel circumstances to the Scotch or the English—and more especially to the Scotch—mind, what would become of the privileges conveyed by the act after the Scotch members, who were their natural guardians, were withdrawn from Parliament? I was speaking of the Scotch members in order to bring it very distinctly to the minds of honorable members, supposing that Scotland had

entertained—what she never had reason to entertain—the desire for a domestic legislature. I must confess I think that Ireland ought to have security on that subject—security that advantage would not be taken, so far as we can preclude the possibility of it, of the absence of Irish representatives from Parliament for the purpose of tampering with any portion of the boon which we propose to confer on Ireland by this act. I think we have found a method for dealing with that difficulty. I may be very sanguine, but I hope that the day may come when Ireland will have reason to look on this act, if adopted by Parliament, as for practical purposes her Magna Charta. A Magna Charta for Ireland ought to be most jealously and effectively assured, and it will be assured, against unhallowed and unlawful interference.

Two cases at once occur to the mind. There might be alterations of detail in a law of this kind on which everybody might be agreed. We think it would be very absurd to require either the construction or reconstruction of a cumbrous and difficult machinery for the purpose of disposing of cases of this kind, and therefore we propose that the provisions of this act might be modified with the concurrence of the Irish legislature, or in conformity with an address from the Irish legislature. That is intended for cases where there is a general agreement. I hope it will not happen, but I admit it might happen, that in some point or other the foresight and sagacity now brought to bear on this subject might prove insufficient. It is possible, though I trust it is not probable, that material alterations might be found requisite, that on these amendments there might be differences of opinion; and yet, however improbable the case may be, it is a case which it might be proper to pro-

vide for beforehand. What we then should propose is that the provisions of this act should not be altered, except either on an address from the Irish legislature to the crown such as I have described, or else, after replacing and recalling into action the full machinery under which Irish representatives now sit here, and Irish peers sit in the House of Lords, so that when their case again came to be tried they might have the very same means of defending their constitutional rights as they have now. Now, we believe that is one of those cases which are often best averted by making a good provision against them.

Now, upon the footing which I have endeavored to describe, we propose to relieve Irish peers and representatives from attendance at Westminster, and at the same time to preserve absolutely the fiscal unity of the empire. Let me say that there are several reasons that occur to me which might well incline the prudence of Irishmen to adopt an arrangement of this kind. If there were Irish representatives in this House at the same time that a domestic legislature sat in Ireland, I think that the presence of those Irish representatives would have some tendency to disparage the domestic legislature. I think there would be serious difficulties that would arise besides the insurmountable difficulty that I have pointed out as to the division of subjects. Even if it were possible to divide the subjects, what an anomaly it would be, what a mutilation of all our elementary ideas about the absolute equality of members in this House, were we to have ordinarily among us two classes of members, one of them qualified to vote on all kinds of business and another qualified only to vote here and there on particular kinds of business, and obliged to submit to some criterion

or other—say the authority of the chair—novel for such a purpose and difficult to exercise—in order to determine what kinds of business they could vote upon, and what kinds of business they must abstain from voting on! There would, I think, be another difficulty in determining what the number of those members should be. My opinion is that there would be great jealousy of the habitual presence of 108 Irish members in this House, even for limited purposes, after a legislative body had been constructed in Ireland; and on the other hand I can very well conceive that Ireland would exceedingly object to the reduction—the material reduction—of those members. I am sorry to have to mention another difficulty, which is this—Ireland has not had the practice in local self-government that has been given to England and Scotland. We have unfortunately shut her out from that experience. In some respects we have been jealous, in others niggardly toward Ireland. It might be very difficult to Ireland in the present state of things to man a legislative chamber in Dublin, and at the same time to present in this House an array of so much distinguished ability as I think all parties will admit has been exhibited on the part of Ireland during recent Parliaments on the benches of this House.

But I pass on from this portion of the question, having referred to these two initiatory propositions as principal parts of the foundation of the bill—namely, first, that it is proposed that the Irish representation in Parliament at Westminster should cease unless in the contingent and I hope hardly possible case to which I have alluded, and next that the fiscal unity of the empire shall be absolutely maintained. My next duty is to state what the powers of the proposed legislative body will be.

The capital article of that legislative body will be that it should have the control of the executive government of Ireland as well as of legislative business. Evidently, I think, it was a flaw in the system of 1782 that adequate provision was not made for that purpose, and we should not like to leave a flaw of such a nature in the work we are now undertaking. In 1782 there were difficulties that we have not now before us. At that time it might have been very fairly said that no one could tell how a separate legislature would work unless it had under its control what is termed a responsible government. We have no such difficulty and no such excuse now. The problem of responsible government has been solved for us in our colonies. It works very well there; and in perhaps a dozen cases in different quarters of the globe it works to our perfect satisfaction. It may be interesting to the House if I recount the fact that that responsible government in the colonies was, I think, first established by one of our most distinguished statesmen, Earl Russell, when he held the office of Colonial Secretary in the government of Lord Melbourne. But it was a complete departure from established tradition, and if I remember right, not more than two or three years before that generous and wise experiment was tried Lord Russell had himself written a most able despatch to show that it could not be done; that with responsible government in the colonies you would have two centres of gravity and two sources of motion in the empire; while a united empire absolutely required that there should be but one, and that consequently the proposition could not be entertained. Such was the view of the question while it was yet at a distance, and such perhaps may have been our view on the subject I am now discussing while it was yet at a dis-

tance. But it has been brought near to us by the circumstances of the late election, and I believe that if we look closely at its particulars we should find that many of the fears with which we may have regarded it are perfectly unreal, and especially so that great panic, that great apprehension of all, the fear lest it should prove injurious to what it is our first duty to maintain—namely, the absolute unity and integrity of the empire.

There is another point in regard to the powers of the legislative body of which I wish to make specific mention. Two courses might have been followed. One would be to endow this legislative body with particular legislative powers. The other is to except from the sphere of its action those subjects which we think ought to be excepted, and to leave it everything else which is the consequence of the plans before us. There will be an enumeration of disabilities, and everything not included in that enumeration will be left open to the domestic legislature. As I have already said, the administrative power by a responsible government would pass under our proposals with the legislative power. Then, sir, the legislative body would be subject to the provisions of the act in the first place as to its own composition. But we propose to introduce into it what I would generally explain as two orders, though not two Houses; and we suggest that with regard to the popular order, which will be the more numerous, the provisions of the act may be altered at any period after the first dissolution; but with regard to the other and less numerous order, the provisions of the act can only be altered after the assent of the crown to an address from the legislative body for that purpose. We should provide generally—and on that I conceive there would be no difference of opinion—that this body should be

subject to all the prerogatives of the crown, but only should insert a particular provision to the effect that its *maximum* duration, without dissolution, should not exceed five years.

I will now tell the House—and I would beg particular attention to this—what are the functions that we propose to withdraw from the cognizance of this legislative body. The three grand and principal functions are, first, everything that relates to the crown—succession, prerogatives, and the mode of administering powers during incapacity, regency, and, in fact, all that belongs to the crown. The next would be all that belongs to defence—the army, the navy, the entire organization of armed force. I do not say the police force, which I will touch upon by and by, but everything belonging to defence. And the third would be the entire subject of foreign and colonial relations. Those are the subjects most properly Imperial, and I will say belonging as a principle to the legislature established under the Act of Union and sitting at Westminster. There are some other subjects which I will briefly touch upon. In the first place, it would not be competent to the domestic legislature in Ireland to alter the provisions of the act which we are now about to pass, as I hope, and which I ask that we should pass with the consent of the three countries—it would not be competent to the Irish legislative body to alter those provisions, excepting in points where they are designedly left open as part of the original contract and settlement. We do not propose universal disability as to contracts, but there are certain contracts made in Ireland under circumstances so peculiar that we think we ought to except them from the action of the legislative body. There are also some analogous provisions made in respect to

charters anterior to the act which in our opinion ought only to be alterable after the assent of the crown to an address from the legislative body for that purpose. There is another disability that we propose to lay upon the legislative body; and it is one of those with respect to which I am bound to say in my belief there is no real apprehension that the thing would be done, but at the same time, though there may not be a warranted apprehension, there are many honest apprehensions which it is our duty to consider as far as we can. We propose to provide that the legislative body should not be competent to pass a law for the establishment or the endowment of any particular religion. Those I may call exceptions of principle. Then there are exceptions of what I may call practical necessity for ordinary purposes. The first of these is the law of trade and navigation. I assume that as to trade and navigation at large, it would be a great calamity to Ireland to be separated from Great Britain. The question of taxation in relation to trade and navigation I have already mentioned. The same observation applies to the subject of coinage and legal tender, but we do not propose to use the term "currency," simply because there is an ambiguity about it. Ireland might think fit to pass a law providing for the extinction of private issues in Ireland, and that no bank-notes should be issued in Ireland except under the authority and for the advantage of the state. I own it is my opinion that Ireland would do an extremely sensible thing if she passed such a law. It is my most strong and decided opinion that we ought to have the same law ourselves, but the block of business has prevented that and many other good things toward the attainment of which I hope we are now going to open and clear the way. I only use that as

an illustration to show that I should be very sorry if we were needlessly to limit the free action of the Irish legislature upon Irish matters. There are other subjects on which I will not dwell. One of them is the subject of weights and measures; another is the subject of copyright. These are not matters for discussion at the present moment.

There is, however, one other important subject with regard to which we propose to leave it entirely open to the judgment of Ireland—that subject is the Post-Office. Our opinion is that it would be for the convenience of both countries if the post-office were to remain under the control of the Postmaster-General; but the post-office requires an army of servants, and I think that Ireland might not wish to see all the regulations connected with that unarmed army left to an English authority. We have, therefore, placed the post-office in the bill under circumstances which would enable the legislative body in Ireland to claim for itself authority on this subject if it should see fit. There are some other matters, such as the quarantine laws, and one or two others which stand in the same category. Now, sir, that I believe I may give as a sufficient description of the exceptions from the legislative action of the proposed Irish legislature, bearing in mind the proposition that everything which is not excepted is conferred.

I have dealt with the powers of the legislative body.

I come next to the composition of the legislative body. We propose to provide for it as follows. I have referred to the protection of minorities. We might constitute a legislative body in Ireland by a very brief enactment if we were to say that the 103 members now representing Ireland and 103 more members, perhaps elected by the same constituen-

cies, should constitute the one and only legislative House in Ireland without the introduction of what I may call the dual element. But, sir, we are of opinion that if a proposition of that kind were made, in the first place, it would be stated that it did not afford legitimate protection for minorities. And, in the second place, it might be thought by many of those who would be less sensitive on the subject of minorities that some greater provision was required for stability and consistency in the conduct of the complex work of legislation than could possibly be supplied by a single set of men elected under an absolutely single influence. Upon that account, sir, we propose to introduce into this legislative body what we have termed two orders. These orders would sit and deliberate together. There would be a power on the demand of either order for separate voting. The effect of that separate voting would be that while the veto was in force, while it sufficed to bar the enactment of a bill, there would be an absolute veto of one order upon the other. Such veto, in our view, might be salutary and useful for the purpose of insuring deliberation and consistency with adequate consideration in the business of making laws. But it ought not to be perpetual. If it were perpetual, a block would arise, as it might arise conceivably, and as really, we may almost say, we have seen it arise in certain cases in the colonies, particularly in one¹ where there were two perfectly independent orders. What we, therefore, propose is that this veto can only be operative for a limited time, say until a dissolution, or for a period of three years, whichever might be the longer of the two.

¹ In 1832 the House of Assembly in Lower Canada stopped the supplies.

So much, sir, for the relation of these two orders, the one to the other. I may observe that that distinction of orders would be available and is almost necessary with a view to maintaining the only form of control over the judicial body known to us in this country—viz., the concurrence of two authorities chosen under somewhat different influences in one common conclusion with regard to the propriety of removing a judge from his office.

Now, sir, I will just describe very briefly the composition of these orders. It may not have occurred to many gentlemen that, if we succeed in the path we are now opening, with respect to the twenty-eight distinguished individuals who now occupy the place of representative peers of Ireland, it will not be possible, we think, for them to continue to hold their places in the House of Lords after the Irish representatives have been removed from attending the House of Commons. I do not say that the precedent is an exact one, but the House may remember that in the case of the disestablishment of the Irish Church we did disable the bishops who were entitled to sit for life from continuing—I mean disable them personally from continuing—to sit in the House of Lords after the disestablishment of the Irish Church. We do not wish, sir, to entail this personal disability. We propose that these twenty-eight peers shall have the option of sitting, if they think fit, as a portion of the first order in the Irish legislative assembly. And that they shall have the power—that they shall personally have the power—of sitting there, as they sit in the House of Lords, for life. There may, sir, be those who think this option will not be largely used. I am not one of that number. I believe that the Irish peers have an

Irish as well as an imperial patriotism. In the eighteenth century Irish peers were not ashamed of the part they played in the Irish Parliament. It was, I think, the Duke of Leinster who moved the address in the Irish House of Peers, which he carried, expressing the confidence of that House in Lord Fitzwilliam. I may be too sanguine, but I say boldly that if this measure pass under happy circumstances, especially if it pass without political exasperation, one of its effects will be a great revival of the local as well as a great confirmation and extension of imperial patriotism. At any rate it is our duty, I think, to provide that the Irish peers, the twenty-eight representative Irish peers, may form part of the Irish legislative body. There will be no disability entailed upon any Irish peer from being at once a member of the Irish legislative body and likewise of the House of Lords. In the last century many distinguished men sat in both, and in the circumstances we certainly see no cause for putting an end to the double qualification which was thus enjoyed, and which, I think, worked beneficially. There is a difficulty, however, to which I will just advert for one moment in combining the connection or place of these twenty-eight peers who are to sit for life with the rest of the first order of the chamber. We propose as to the remainder of the first order that it shall consist of seventy-five members, to be elected by the Irish people under conditions which we propose to specify in the schedule to the act, not yet filled up as to its details. But I mention at once the two provisions which would apply to the election of seventy-five members. First of all, the constituency would be a constituency composed of persons occupying to the value of £25 and upward, and secondly, they would be elected for a period, as a general rule,

of ten years, with a little exception I need not now refer to. Thirdly, they will be elected subject to a property qualification of realty to the extent of £200 a year, or of personalty to the extent of £200 a year, or a capital value of £4,000. The peers would ultimately be replaced by twenty-eight members, elected under the above conditions. We cannot insure that all these twenty-eight peers shall die at the same time: it would, consequently, be extremely difficult to devise an electoral machinery for the purpose of supplying their places by election. We therefore propose to grant to the crown power, limited to a term which we think may fairly well exhaust the present generation, of filling their places by nomination, not for life, but down to the date to be fixed by the act. After the system had ceased to operate, and the representative peers had ceased to be in that first order, the first order of the legislative body would be elected entirely upon the basis I have described.

With regard to the second order, its composition would be simple. Of course, it would be proposed to the 103 gentlemen who now represent Ireland in this House from county districts, from citizen towns, and from the University of Dublin, that they should take their places in the Irish Legislative Chamber in Dublin. We should likewise propose as nearly as possible to duplicate that body. Another 101 members, not 103, we propose should be elected by the county districts and the citizen towns in exactly the same manner as that in which the present 101 members for counties and towns have been elected. We shall also propose that in the event of any refusal to sit, refusals to accept the option given, the place shall be filled up by election

under the machinery now existing. I ought to say a word about Dublin University. We do not propose to interfere by any action of ours with the existing arrangements of Dublin University in one way or another. But certainly we could not ask the House to adopt a plan at our suggestion which would double the representation of Dublin University. We propose to leave it as it is, but at the same time to empower the legislative body, if it should think fit, to appoint a corresponding representation by two members in favor of the Royal University of Ireland. There would be no compulsion to exercise that power, but it would be left to the discretion of the legislative body. The effect of that would be to give to the first order of the proposed Legislative Chamber, or body, a number making 103; to give to the second order the number of 206 at the outside, or 204 if the power with regard to the Royal University were not exercised, and to leave the relations of the two orders upon the footing which I have described.

I must now say a few words upon the subject of the Executive, and what we think most requisite with regard to the executive is that our act should be as elastic as possible. It is quite evident that though the legislative transition can be made, and ought to be made, *per saltum*, by a single stroke, the executive transition must necessarily be gradual. We propose, therefore, sir, to leave everything as it is until it is altered in the regular course; so that there shall be no breach of continuity in the government of the country, but that by degrees, as may be arranged by persons whom we feel convinced will meet together in a spirit of coöperation, and will find no great, much less

insurmountable, difficulty in their way, the old state of things shall be adjusted to the new. On the one hand, the representatives of the old system will remain on the ground; on the other hand, the principle of responsible government is freely and fully conceded. That principle of responsible government will work itself out in every necessary detail. It has often, sir, been proposed to abolish the viceroyalty, and some gentlemen have even been sanguine enough to believe that to abolish the viceroyalty was to solve the whole Irish problem. I must say that I think that that involves a faculty of belief far beyond any power either of the understanding or imagination to which I have ever been able to aspire. We propose to leave the viceroyalty without interference by the act, except in the particulars which I am about to name. The office of the viceroyalty will only be altered by statute. He would not be the representative of a party. He would not quit office with the outgoing government. He would have round him, as he has now, in a certain form, a privy council, to aid and to advise him. Within that privy council the executive body would form itself under the action of the principle of responsible government for the purpose of administering the various offices of the State. The Queen would be empowered to delegate to him in case his office should be permanently continued—which I am far from believing to be unlikely—any of the prerogatives which she now enjoys, or which she would exercise under this act: and, finally, we have not forgotten that his office almost alone is still affected by one solitary outstanding religious disability—a kind of Lot's wife when everything else has been destroyed—and that religious disability we propose by our bill to remove.

The next point is with regard to the judges of the superior courts, and here I draw a partial distinction between the present and the future judges. As regards the judges of the superior courts, now holding office, we desire to secure to them their position and their emoluments in the same absolute form as that in which they now exist. Although they would become chargeable upon the Consolidated Fund of Ireland, which we propose to constitute by the act, still they would retain their lien—so to call it—on the Consolidated Fund of Great Britain. Under the peculiar circumstances of Ireland, we cannot forget that some of these judges, by no fault of their own, have been placed in relations more or less uneasy with popular influences, and with what under the new Constitution will in all probability be the dominating influence in that country. We cannot overlook the peculiarities of Irish history in framing the provisions of this bill, and we therefore propose, both with regard to the judges now holding office and with regard to other persons who in what they deemed loyal service to the empire have been concerned in the administration and conduct of the criminal law in Ireland, that her Majesty may, not lightly or wholesale, but if she should see cause on any particular occasion, by order in council, antedate the pensions of these particular persons. With regard to the future judges we hold the matter to be more simple. We propose to provide that they should hold office during good behavior, that their salaries—these are the superior judges alone—should be charged on the Irish Consolidated Fund, that they shall be removable only on a joint address from the two orders of the legislative body, and that they should be appointed under the influence, as a general rule, of the responsible Irish gov-

ernment. There is an exception which we propose to make in regard to the Court of Exchequer, which is a Court of Revenue Pleas. I will not enter into any details now, but the enormous financial relations which will subsist between Great Britain and Ireland if our measure be carried made us feel, for reasons which I shall perhaps on another occasion more fully explain, that it is necessary for us to keep a certain amount of hold on the Court of Exchequer, or, at least, on two of its members; but the general rule of our measure will be that the action of the judges will pass under the new Irish executive, and will rest with them, just as it rested in former times with the old Irish executive.

I must now say a few words on the important subject of the Irish Constabulary. The substance of those words really amounts to this—that I think there remains much for consideration in order to devise the details of a good and prudent system; but we think it our first duty to give a distinct assurance to the present members of that distinguished and admirable force that their condition will not be put to prejudice by this act, either in respect of their terms of office, their terms of service, or with regard to the authority under which they are employed. The case of the Dublin police is not quite the same, but we propose the same conditions with regard to the Dublin police, as far, at least, as the terms of service are concerned. With regard to the local police I will say nothing, because I do not want at present to anticipate what may be matter hereafter for free consideration or discussion, or for the action of the Irish legislative body. There will be no breach of continuity in the administration with regard to the police.

One thing I cannot omit to say. The constabulary, as I have said, is an admirable force, and I do not intend to qualify in the smallest degree what I have already said, but the constabulary on its present footing exhibits one of the most remarkable instances of waste of treasure and of enormous expense, not with good results, but with unhappy results, with which and under which the civil government and the general government of Ireland have hitherto been carried on. The total charge of the constabulary amounts to a million and a half, including the Dublin police. Now, Ireland is a cheaper country than England, and if the service were founded on the same principle and organized in the same manner, it ought, per thousand of the population, to be cheaper in Ireland than in England, assuming Ireland to be in a normal condition; and our object is to bring it into a normal condition.

Now the House will perhaps be surprised when I tell them this. The present constabulary of Ireland costs £1,500,000 a year, every penny of it now paid out of the British Exchequer. If the police of Ireland were organized upon the same principles and on the same terms as the police in England, instead of costing £1,500,000, it would cost £600,000 a year. That will convey to the House an idea, first, of the enormous charge at which we have been governing Ireland under our present system, and, secondly, of the vast field for judicious reductions which the system I am now proposing ought to offer to the Irish people. I anticipate a vast reduction, both in the force and in the expenditure. The charge is now a million and a half. We propose that the Consolidated Fund of Great Britain—this subject I shall revert to in the financial statement which I shall have to put before the House—shall for a time relieve

the Irish legislative body of all expenditure in excess of a million. I am bound to say that I do not look upon a million as the proper charge to be imposed on Ireland. I am perfectly convinced, however, that the charge will be reduced to a much smaller sum, of which Ireland, of course, will reap the benefit. After two years the legislative body may fix the charge for the whole police and for the constabulary of Ireland, with a saving of existing rights. One thing I must say. We have no desire to exempt the police of Ireland in its final form from the ultimate control of the legislative body. We have no jealousies on the subject; and I own I have a strong personal opinion that when once the recollection of the old antipathies has been effectually abated, the care of providing for the ordinary security of life and property of the citizens will be regarded as the very first duty of any good local government in Ireland. I think it will be understood from what I have stated that the constabulary would remain under the present terms of service and under the present authority, although I do not say that this is to be so forever. Assuming control over the constabulary, that control will be prospective, and will not import any injury to existing rights.

With respect to the civil service, of course the future civil service of the country generally will be absolutely under the legislative body. With respect to the present civil service, we have not thought that their case was exactly analogous either to the constabulary or the judicial offices, and yet it is a great transition, and moreover it will without doubt be the desire of the legislative body of Ireland forthwith, or very early, to effect a great economy in its establishment. We have, therefore, considered to some

extent in what way we can at once provide what is just for the civil servants of Ireland, and at the same time set free the hands of the legislative body to proceed with the salutary work of economy and retrenchment. Our opinion is that, upon the whole, it will be wise in the joint interests of both to authorize the civil servants now serving to claim the gratuity or pension which would be due to them upon the abolition of their offices, provided they shall serve not less than two years to prevent an inconvenient lapse in the practical business of the country, and at the close of those two years both parties would be free to negotiate afresh, the civil servants not being bound to remain and the legislative body not being in any way bound to continue to employ them. That is all I have to say upon the subject of the new Irish Constitution.

I am afraid I have still many subjects on which I have some details to show, and I fear I have already detained the House too long. I have now, sir, to give a practical exposition of the phrase which I have used that we looked upon it as an essential condition of our plan that there should be an equitable distribution of imperial charges. The meaning of that is, what proportion shall Ireland pay? I must remind gentlemen before I enter upon the next explanation that the proportion to be paid is not the only thing to be considered; you have to consider the basis upon which that proportionate payment is to be applied. Looking upon the proportionate payment, we now stand thus. At the time of the Union, it was intended that Ireland should pay two-seventeenths, or in the relation of 1 to 7½, out of the total charge of the United Kingdom. The actual true payment now made by the Irish taxpayer is not 1 to 7½, but some-

thing under 1 to 12, or about 1 to 11½—that is the total expenditure. The proposal I make is that the proportion chargeable to Ireland shall be 1 to 14, or one-fifteenths, but that will not be understood until I come to join it with other particulars. I will look, however, sir, a little to the question, what are the best tests of capacity to pay? Many of these tests have been suggested—one of them is the income tax, which I conceive to be a very imperfect indication. The income tax, I believe, would give a proportion, not of 1 to 14, but of 1 to 19. This is to be borne in mind if you have regard to the income tax, that while, on the one hand, it is paid in Ireland upon a lower valuation than in England or in Scotland—because, as we all know, in England Schedule A is levied on the full rent—it is also unquestionable that many Irishmen also hold securities upon which dividends are received in London and pay income tax, I hope, before the dividends come into the hands of the persons entitled to them. Therefore it is almost a certainty that a considerable sum ought to be added to the Irish income tax, which would raise it from the proportion of 1 to 19 to perhaps 1 to 17. But there are two other tests which I consider far superior to the income tax. One is the test afforded us by the death duties, not by the amount levied, because the amounts levied vary capriciously according to the consanguinity scale, but by the property passing under the death duties. The amount of property on which, on an average of three years, the death duties fell was for Great Britain £170,000,000, and for Ireland £12,908,000, or 1 to 13. I have taken three years, because they represent the period since we entered upon a somewhat new administration of the death duties, and that is by far the best basis of comparison. When we come to the valuation, inasmuch as

Ireland is valued much lower in proportion to the real value than England and Scotland, the valuation in the latest year for which we have returns is in Great Britain £166,000,000, and for Ireland £13,833,000, giving a proportion of 1 to 12, or one-thirteenth.

Under these circumstances, what ought we to do? In my opinion, we ought to make for Ireland an equitable arrangement, and I think that when I propose to assume the proportion of one-fifteenth, it will be seen that that is an equitable or even generous arrangement, after I have mentioned three considerations. The first of these considerations is that if we start an Irish legislative body, we must start it with some balance to its credit. But if we are to start it with a balance to its credit, I know of no way except the solitary £20,000 a year which still remains to be worked out of the Church surplus after all the demands made upon it. I know of no way of honestly manufacturing that balance except by carving it out of the budget for the coming year, and providing for the sum at the expense, as it will then be, not of the Irish exchequer exclusively, but at the expense of the English and Scotch taxpayers. That is one consideration; the second consideration is this. I take this one to fourteen or one-fifteenth for the purpose of ascertaining what share Ireland is to pay to the imperial expenditure. But when I said that Ireland now pays 1 to 11½ or 1 to 12½ of the imperial expenditure, I meant the amount of the whole gross imperial expenditure; and when I say that we shall ask her to pay one-fifteenth of the imperial expenditure in the future, that is an imperial expenditure very materially cut down. For, upon consideration, it has been thought right in computing the military expenditure to exclude from it altogether what

ought strictly to be called war charges. We do not propose to assume, in fixing the future imperial contribution of Ireland, to base that calculation on the supposition of her sharing in charges analogous, for example, to the vote of credit for eleven millions last year. Therefore this proportion of one-fifteenth is to be applied to a scale of imperial expenditure materially reduced.

But, sir, there is another consideration which I think it right to mention. It is this—that this imperial contribution would be paid by Ireland out of a fund composed, in the first instance, of the entire receipts paid into the Irish exchequer; but that, sir, is not a true test of the amount of taxation paid by Ireland. There are goods which pay duty in England, and which are exported, duty paid, to Ireland, which are consumed in Ireland, and upon which, therefore, the duty is really paid by Irishmen, while the receipts go into the imperial exchequer. But there is not only a corresponding movement the other way, but there is a movement very much larger and more important. More than one million of duty, I think £1,080,000, is paid upon spirits in Ireland that are exported to Great Britain. Every shilling of that duty is really paid by the Englishman and the Scotchman; but at the same time the whole receipts go into the Irish exchequer. The same thing holds with respect to the porter brewed in Ireland. The same thing holds with regard to the very considerable manufacture of tobacco carried on in Ireland. We have made it the object of our best efforts to ascertain how much money Ireland loses to England by the process which I have described—and which I have no doubt is accurately understood by all members of the House—how much money Ireland loses to

Great Britain by the flow of duty-paid commodities from Great Britain to Ireland; and how much Great Britain loses to Ireland from the flow of such commodities from Ireland to Great Britain. The result of this investigation is—I state it with confidence, not actually as if it were to be demonstrated in every point by parliamentary returns, but I state it as a matter of certainty with regard to a far greater portion of the sum, and as a matter certainly subject to very little doubt—that the Irish receipt gains from Great Britain by the process I have described more than Great Britain gains from Ireland, and more to no less an amount than £1,400,000, paid by the British taxpayer, and forming part of the Irish receipt. If you maintain the fiscal unity of the empire, if you do not erect—which I trust you will not erect—custom-houses between Great Britain and Ireland, if you let things take their natural course, according to the ordinary and natural movement of trade, £1,400,000 will be paid to the benefit of Ireland as a charge upon the English and Scotch taxpayer, and will form a portion of the fund out of which Ireland will defray the imperial contribution which we propose to levy upon her.

If this amount of imperial contribution to be paid by Ireland, which I have described as one-fourteenth, comes to be reduced by subtracting this sum of £1,400,000, the portion which Ireland will have to pay will be, not one-fourteenth, but a fraction under one-twenty-sixth. That is a very great change. It is a benefit she gets not only in the state of the law, but owing to the course of trade. We cannot take it away without breaking up the present absolute freedom between the two countries. I hope this will be borne in mind by those who think this charge of one-fifteenth is a heavy charge to be thrown upon Ireland;

and by those who think, as I certainly do, that in a case of this kind, after all that has occurred when two countries are very strong and very rich, compared with a third of far more restricted means, the pecuniary arrangements ought to be equitable and even bountiful in some moderate degree. It will be interesting to the House to know what payment *per capita* the plan I have described will allot to the Irishman and to the Briton respectively. I use the word "Briton" because I know that it will gratify my friends from Scotland. The incidents of this plan *per capita* I will state as follows. In the first place, if I were to take the present contribution of Ireland to the entire expenditure of the country according to the receipts of the two exchequers, the inhabitant of Great Britain pays £2 10s. *per capita*, and the inhabitant in Ireland £1 13s. 7d. That is obviously and inequitably high for Ireland. But if I take the real payment of the Irish taxpayer, and compare that with the real payment of the English taxpayer, it will follow that the English payment is £2 10s. 11d. as against £1 7s. 10d. of Ireland, which is certainly a more equitable proportion.

Now I pass to the basis of one-fourteenth or one-fifteenth. This is not founded upon the total expenditure of the country, but upon what we are about to reckon as imperial expenditure and the respective contribution to the imperial exchequer. The respective contribution *per capita* will be for Great Britain £1 10s. 11d., and for Ireland 13s. 5d., and I do not think that that is an inequitable arrangement. I wish to exhibit exactly what alterations we propose to make. Under the proportion now proposed, Ireland will pay 13s. 5d., while, if the present proportion were maintained, she would pay 16s. 10d., which will be a very

considerable diminution in the amount of her contribution *per capita*.

I will state only one other striking fact with regard to the Irish expenditure. The House would like to know what an amount has been going on—and which at this moment is going on—of what I must call not only a waste of public money, but a demoralizing waste of public money, demoralizing in its influence upon both countries. The civil charges *per capita* at this moment are in Great Britain 8s. 2d. and in Ireland 16s. They have increased in Ireland in the last fifteen years by sixty-three per cent, and my belief is that if the present legislative and administrative systems be maintained you must make up your minds to a continued never-ending and never-to-be-limited augmentation. The amount of the Irish contribution upon the basis I have described would be as follows—One-fifteenth of the annual debt charge of £22,000,000 would be £1,466,000, one-fifteenth of the army and navy charge, after excluding what we call war votes, and also excluding the charges for volunteers and yeomanry, would be £1,666,000, and the amount of the civil charges, which are properly considered imperial, would entail upon Ireland £110,000, or a total charge properly imperial of £3,242,000. I am now ready to present what I may call an Irish budget, a debtor and creditor account for the Irish exchequer. The customs produce in Ireland a gross sum of £1,880,000, the excise £4,800,000, the stamps £600,000, the income tax £550,000, and non-tax revenue, including the post-office, £1,020,000. And, perhaps, here again I ought to mention as an instance of the demoralizing waste which now attends Irish administration, that which will perhaps

surprise the House to know—namely, that while in England and Scotland we levy from the post-office and telegraph system a large surplus income, in Ireland the post-office and the telegraphs just pay their expenses, or leave a surplus so small as not to be worth mentioning. I call that a very demoralizing way of spending money. Although I believe that there is no purer department in the country than the post-office, yet the practical effect of our method of administering Ireland by influences known to be English and not Irish leads to a vast amount of unnecessary expenditure.

The total receipts of the Irish exchequer are thus shown to amount to £8,350,000, and against that I have to place an imperial contribution which I may call permanent, because it will last for a great number of years, of £3,242,000. I put down £1,000,000 for the constabulary, because that would be a first charge, although I hope that it will soon come under very effective reduction. I put down £2,510,000 for the other civil charges in Ireland, and there again I have not the smallest doubt that that charge will likewise be very effectually reduced by an Irish government. Finally, the collection of revenue is £834,000, making a total charge thus far of £7,586,000. Then we have thought it essential to include in this arrangement, not only for our own sakes, but for the sake of Ireland also, a payment on account of the Sinking Fund against the Irish portion of the national debt. The Sinking Fund is now paid for the whole national debt. We have now got to allot a certain portion of that debt to Ireland. We think it necessary to maintain that Sinking Fund, and especially for the interest of Ireland. When Ireland gets the management of her

own affairs, I venture to prophecy that she will want, for useful purposes, to borrow money. But the difficulty of that operation will be enormously higher or lower according to the condition of her public credit. Her public credit is not yet born. It has yet to lie like an infant in the cradle, and it may require a good deal of nursing, but no nursing would be effectual unless it were plain and palpable to the eye of the whole world that Ireland had provision in actual working order for discharging her old obligations so as to make it safe for her to contract new obligations more nearly allied to her own immediate wants. I therefore put down three-quarters of a million for Sinking Fund. That makes the total charge £7,946,000, against a total income of £8,350,000, or a surplus of £404,000. But I can state to the House that that £404,000 is a part only of the fund, which, under the present state of things, it would be the duty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the three countries to present to you for the discharge of our collective expenditure.

Sir, the House has heard me with astonishing patience while I have endeavored to perform what I knew must prove an almost interminable task. There is only one subject more on which I feel it still necessary to detain the House. It is commonly said in England and Scotland—and in the main it is, I think, truly said—that we have for a great number of years been struggling to pass good laws for Ireland. We have sacrificed our time, we have neglected our own business, we have advanced our money, which I do not think at all a great favor conferred on her, and all this in the endeavor to give Ireland good laws. That is quite true in regard to the general course of legis-

lation since 1839. But many of those laws have been passed under influences which can hardly be described otherwise than as influences of fear. Some of our laws have been passed in a spirit of grudging and of jealousy. It is most painful for me to consider that after four or five years' parliamentary battle, when a Municipal Corporation Act [1840] was passed for Ireland, it was a very different measure to that which in England and Scotland created complete and absolute municipal life. Were I to come to the history of the land question I could tell a still sadder tale. Let no man assume that he fully knows that history until he has followed it from year to year, beginning with the Devon Commission [appointed 1843] or with the efforts of Mr. Sharman Crawford.¹ The appointment of the Devon Commission does, in my opinion, the highest honor to the memory of Sir Robert Peel. Then notice the mode in which the whole labors of that commission were frustrated by the domination of selfish interests in the British Parliament. Our first effort at land legislation was delayed until so late a period as the year 1870. I take this opportunity of remarking that sound views on the land question were not always confined to Irish members, nor to the Liberal side of this House. The late Mr. Napier, who became Lord Chancellor of Ireland, when he sat [1848-58] in this House for the academical constituency of Dublin, developed with great earnestness truly liberal views on the subject of Irish land, and made generous efforts in that direction—efforts which were, however, intercepted.

But, sir, I do not deny the general good intentions of Parliament on a variety of great and conspicuous occasions,

¹ Member for Rochdale, 1841-52, and founder of the Tenant Right Association.

and its desire to pass good laws for Ireland. But let me say that in order to work out the purposes of government there is something more in this world occasionally required than even the passing of good laws. It is sometimes requisite not only that good laws should be passed, but also that they should be passed by the proper persons. The passing of many good laws is not enough in cases where the strong permanent instincts of the people, their distinctive marks of character, the situation and history of the country, require not only that these laws should be good, but that they should proceed from a congenial and native source, and besides being good laws, should be their own laws. In former times it might have been doubted—I have myself doubted—whether this instinct had been thus developed in Ireland. If such doubts could be entertained before the last general election they can be entertained no longer.

The principle that I am laying down I am not laying down exceptionally for Ireland. It is the very principle upon which, within my recollection, to the immense advantage of the country, we have not only altered but revolutionized our method of governing the colonies. I had the honor to hold office in the Colonial Department—perhaps I ought to be ashamed to confess it—fifty-one years ago. At that time the colonies were governed from Downing Street. It is true that some of them had legislative assemblies, but with these we were always in conflict. We were always fed with information by what was termed the British party in those colonies. A clique of gentlemen constituted themselves the British party; and the non-British party, which was sometimes called the “disloyal party,” was com-

posed of the enormous majority of the population. We had continual shocks, continual debates, and continual conflicts. All that has changed. England tried to pass good laws for the colonies at that period, but the colonies said, "We do not want your good laws; we want our own." We admitted the reasonableness of that principle, and it is now coming home to us from across the seas. We have to consider whether it is applicable to the case of Ireland. Do not let us disguise this from ourselves. We stand face to face with what is termed Irish nationality. Irish nationality vents itself in the demand for local autonomy or separate and complete self-government in Irish, not in imperial affairs. Is this an evil in itself? Is it a thing that we should view with horror or apprehension? Is it a thing which we ought to reject or accept only with a wry face, or ought we to wait until some painful and sad necessity is incumbent upon the country, like the necessity of 1780 or the necessity of 1793? Sir, I hold that it is not. There is a saying of Mr. Grattan—who was indeed a fiery and fervid orator, but he was more than that, he was a statesman, his aphorisms are in my opinion weighty, and even profound, and I commend them to the careful reflection and examination of the country—when he was deprecating the surrender of the Irish Parliament, and pointing out that its existence did not prevent the perfect union of the two countries, he remarked, "The channel forbids union, the ocean forbids separation." Is that channel nothing? Do what you will with your steamers and your telegraphs, can you make that channel cease to exist, or to be as if it were not? These sixty miles may appear a little thing, but I ask you what are the twenty miles between England and France? These few miles of water have exercised a vital

influence upon the whole history, the whole development, and the whole national character of our people.

These, sir, are great facts. I hold that there is such a thing as local patriotism, which in itself is not bad, but good. The Welshman is full of local patriotism—the Scotchman is full of local patriotism; the Scotch nationality is as strong as it ever was, and should the occasion arise—which I believe it never can—it will be as ready to assert itself as in the days of Bannockburn. I do not believe that that local patriotism is an evil. I believe it is stronger in Ireland even than in Scotland. Englishmen are eminently English, Scotchmen are profoundly Scotch, and, if I read Irish history aright, misfortune and calamity have wedded her sons to her soil. The Irishman is more profoundly Irish, but it does not follow that because his local patriotism is keen he is incapable of imperial patriotism. There are two modes of presenting the subject. The one is to present what we now recommend as good, and the other to recommend it as a choice of evils. Well, sir, I have argued the matter as if it were a choice of evils; I have recognized as facts entitled to attention the jealousies which I do not share or feel, and I have argued it on that ground as the only ground on which it can be argued, not only in a mixed auditory, but in the public mind and to the country, which cannot give a minute investigation to the operations of that complicated question. But in my own heart I cherish the hope that this is not merely the choice of the lesser evil, but may prove to be rather a good in itself. What is the answer to this? It is only to be found in the view which rests upon the basis of despair and of absolute condemnation of Ireland and Irishmen as

exceptions to the beneficent provisions which enable men in general, and Europeans in particular, and Americans, to be capable of performing civil duties, and which considers an Irishman either as a *lusus naturæ* or one for whom justice, common-sense, moderation, and national prosperity have no meaning, and who can only understand and appreciate perpetual strife and dissension. Well, sir, I am not going to argue that view, which to my mind is founded on a monstrous misconception. I say that the Irishman is as capable of loyalty as another man—I say that if his loyalty has been checked in its development, why is it? Because the laws by which he is governed do not present themselves to him, as they do to us in England and Scotland, with a native and congenial aspect, and I think I can refer to two illustrations which go strongly to support the doctrine I have advanced. Take the case of the Irish soldier, and of the Irish constabulary. Have you a braver or a more loyal man in your army than the Irishman, who has shared every danger with his Scotch and English comrades, and who has never been behind them when confronted by peril, for the sake of the honor and safety of his empire? Compare this case with that of an ordinary Irishman in Ireland. The Irish soldier has voluntarily placed himself under military law, which is to him a self-chosen law, and he is exempted from that difficulty which works upon the population in Ireland—namely, that they are governed by a law which they do not feel has sprung from the soil. Consider how common it is to hear the observation, in discussing the circumstances of Ireland, that while the constabulary are largely taken from the Roman Catholic population and from the very class most open to disaffection, where disaffection exists, they form a splen-

did model of obedience, discipline, and devotion such as the world can hardly match. How is this? It is because they have undertaken a voluntary service which takes them completely out of the category of the ordinary Irishman. They are placed under an authority which is to them congenial because freely accepted. Their loyalty is not checked by the causes that operate on the agricultural population of Ireland. It has grown as freely in the constabulary and in the army as if every man in the constabulary and every Irish soldier had been an Englishman or a Scotchman.

However this may be, we are sensible that we have taken an important decision—our choice has been made. It has not been made without thought; it has been made in the full knowledge that trial and difficulty may confront us on our path. We have no right to say that Ireland through her constitutionally-chosen representatives will accept the plan I offer. Whether it will be so I do not know—I have no title to assume it—but if Ireland does not cheerfully accept it, it is impossible for us to attempt to force upon her what is intended to be a boon; nor can we possibly press England and Scotland to accord to Ireland what she does not heartily welcome and embrace. There are difficulties, but I rely upon the patriotism and sagacity of this House; I rely on the effects of free and full discussion; and I rely more than all upon the just and generous sentiments of the two British nations. Looking forward, I ask the House to assist us in the work which we have undertaken, and to believe that no trivial motive can have driven us to it—to assist us in this work which we believe will restore Parliament to its dignity, and legislation to its free and unimpeded course. I ask you to stay that waste of public treasure which is involved in the present system of

government and legislation in Ireland; and which is not a waste only, but which demoralizes while it exhausts. I ask you to show to Europe and to America that we too can face political problems which America twenty years ago faced, and which many countries in Europe have been called upon to face, and have not feared to deal with. I ask that in our own case we should practice with firm and fearless hand what we have so often preached—the doctrine which we have so often inculcated upon others—namely, that the concession of local self-government is not the way to sap or impair, but the way to strengthen and consolidate unity. I ask that we should learn to rely less upon merely written stipulations, and more upon those better stipulations which are written on the heart and mind of man. I ask that we should apply to Ireland that happy experience which we have gained in England and in Scotland, where the course of generations has now taught us not as a dream or a theory, but as practice and as life, that the best and surest foundation we can find to build upon is the foundation afforded by the affections, the convictions, and the will of the nation; and it is thus, by the decree of the Almighty, that we may be enabled to secure at once the social peace, the fame, the power, and the permanence of the empire.

HOME RULE

HOUSE OF COMMONS, APRIL 13, 1886

I WILL make at the outset one or two very brief remarks upon the speech of the right honorable gentleman.¹ He has quoted words from me with an extension given to them that they do not carry in the original document. The argument which I made upon the proposal² of 1871 was this—that no case had at that time been made to justify any radical change in any of the institutions of the country generally, or any interference with the Constitution of the Imperial Parliament, and I own that at that time, after the Church Act of 1869 and after the Land Act of 1870, I did cherish the hope that we might be able, by legislation from this House, to meet the wants and the wishes of Ireland. I cherished that hope at that time; but at that time, if the right honorable gentleman has done me the justice to make himself completely acquainted with my sentiments expressed in that speech, he will find that it contains none of the apprehensions with which the minds of honorable members opposite are filled, and that, on the contrary, I then stated in the most explicit manner that I had heard with joy, and I accepted with the utmost satisfaction, the assurance that the demand which was beginning to be made by Mr. Butt for Home Rule did not involve in any way the

¹ Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.

² The Home Government Association, afterward the Home Rule League, was founded in 1870. In 1871 Mr. Isaac Butt, Member for the City of Limerick, was elected leader of the Irish party. He is said to have invented the phrase "Home Rule."

disintegration of the empire. But I certainly will not enter into a discussion on the Transvaal Convention, with regard to which I may make the observation that I think that the topics we have to deal with relevant to the matter are sufficient, and I do not consider that any observation from me is wanted on an act which I believe has been recognized by this country as a great act of justice, and as the undoing—perhaps that is the more accurate description of it—of the great act of injustice which stains the memory of our legislation on this subject.

The right honorable gentleman says that I have shown mistrust of the Irish legislature by providing safeguards for minorities. I have already stated in the most distinct terms that the safeguards provided, so far as I am concerned, are not in consequence of mistrust entertained by me, but they are in consequence of mistrust entertained by others. They are reasonable precautions by way of contribution on our part to disarm honest though unfounded jealousy; and however little it may appear that they are likely to attain their end, yet I cannot regret that we have made them. One more observation with respect to the foreign garb of English laws. The right honorable gentleman must understand that I have used those words not with respect to the beneficial acts which have been passed on many occasions by this Parliament for the purpose of meeting the wants of Ireland, but with regard to the ordinary operations of the criminal law in that country, especially in association, as it has constantly been, with the provisions of special repressive or coercive legislation.

Lastly, I must express the astonishment with which I heard the right honorable gentleman refer to the Roman Catholic Association. He spoke of the disappearance of

that association from the scene as a great triumph obtained by the vigor and firmness of the government and the Parliament over unruly elements in Ireland. Why, sir, on the contrary, the disappearance of the Roman Catholic Association was due entirely to the introduction of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill,¹ as unhappily the introduction of that Relief Bill was due, as the Duke of Wellington himself declared, to his apprehension of civil war, and as the alternative to it. The right honorable gentleman could not have afforded a more unhappy instance of that which has been a too common feature of the relations of this House to Ireland, and of those combinations the recurrence of which we are striving to avoid. I was told by my noble friend the member for the Rossendale division² that I had not a formulated demand from Ireland. No, sir; but the Duke of Wellington had a pretty well formulated demand; and we now know—and I am glad that the observations of the right honorable gentleman gave the Irish members below the gangway an opportunity of bearing testimony—we now know in substance what is demanded by Ireland through her constitutionally chosen representatives; and therefore I say, if it be a just and reasonable demand, we cannot hasten too soon to meet it; and we will not wait until the day of disaster, the day of difficulty, and I will add the day of dishonor, to yield, as we have so often yielded, to necessity that which we were unwilling to yield to justice.

Sir, I desire to avoid details in this stage of the debate and at this hour of the night, and I will endeavor to make this sacrifice at any rate, that I will neither defend myself nor censure anybody else; but I will deal as far as I can

¹ In 1829.

² Lord Hartington, now Duke of Devonshire.

with some of the arguments that have recently been laid before us.

One detail I must notice which has been largely introduced into this debate, and in so striking a manner by many members of the House—it is that which relates to the presence of Irish members, or the cessation of that presence, at Westminster. When I spoke on Thursday last I laid down—and now I am going to answer an appeal of the right honorable gentleman who asked me what were the essential conditions of this bill—I laid down, I say, five essential conditions, from which it appeared to me we could under no circumstances depart, and under which the grant of a domestic legislature to Ireland would be justifiable and wise. These were the essential conditions under which, in our opinion, the granting of a domestic legislature to Ireland would be justifiable and wise—first, that it must be consistent with imperial unity; secondly, that it must be founded upon the political equality of the three nations; thirdly, that there must be an equitable distribution of imperial burdens; fourthly, that there should be safeguards for the minority; and fifthly, that it should be in the nature of a settlement, and not of a mere provocation for the revival of fresh demands. I stated that these were the only conditions.

I find I have been reported as having stated that the retention of customs and excise by this country, and the absence of Irish members from this House, were likewise vital and essential conditions. I do not think I used those epithets. If I did, it was probably an inadvertence, for which I apologize, and unquestionably it was in entire contradiction to what I had just stated before, when I laid down the only essential conditions. Sir, what I think with regard to the Irish members—although the question is much

too large for me to attempt to enter fully into it at present—what I thought clear with regard to the Irish members was, in the first place, this—that the 103 Irish members could not possibly continue as now to come here and vote upon all matters—English, Scotch, Irish, and Imperial alike. That I conceived to be wholly indisputable. I stated that I had hoped—that I had long tried to find—some practicable means of distinction between Imperial and British matters, and that my efforts had entirely failed, nor could I see my way to such a distinction. I also stated that in my opinion it was impossible for England, and that no doubt England would never desire or dream of inflicting or forcing upon Ireland taxation without representation; that if Irish members were to disappear either permanently or for a time—I do not say I used these epithets—were to disappear from this House, it must be by the consent of Ireland herself.

Since that time a variety of suggestions have been made in many speeches, which have shown how much interest is felt in this question. It has been suggested that Irish members might come here with limited powers. But I have certainly failed to discover means of drawing the line. It has been stated that they might come in limited numbers, and it has been suggested in a wise and weighty speech delivered by my honorable friend the member for Bedford¹ last night, that an interval of absence from this House was eminently desirable, and perhaps almost of vital necessity for Ireland herself with a view to her own purposes. Then, says my honorable friend, if I understood him right, after such an interval of years has passed, during which, God knows, there will be enough to do for any Parliament—any repre-

¹ Mr. Whitbread.

sentative body that Ireland can be supplied with—after such an interval, if it is desired that Irish members in any number or any proportion, or under any conditions should reappear in this House, that is a problem which, however difficult, British statesmanship may be found adequate to solve. There was great force in what my honorable friend said. I cannot, however, bind myself with regard to these observations or to any of the propositions which I have just cited. I cannot bind myself, still less any of my colleagues, but I think, bearing in mind the importance of the subject, and the vast and immeasurable importance of the purposes we have in view, I do not think we should be right—it would be even presumptuous—were we to take upon ourselves, in the face of the House, at this early stage of the discussion on the bill, entirely to close the doors against any consideration of this kind.

The position, therefore, remains exactly as it was; but I have thought that that reference which I have made to the speech of my honorable friend is no more than that, and other portions of that speech, eminently deserve.

Now, sir, my right honorable friend, the member for East Edinburgh,¹ has addressed the House very fully to-night, and has raised a great number of questions connected with this bill. My right honorable friend is terribly alarmed at the argument drawn from the presence of 86 Nationalist members, 85 of them from Ireland, in this Parliament. He is perfectly alarmed at this argument. I do not know whether he did me the honor to refer to my view of it. If he did, he is entirely mistaken. He treated it as if a statement had been made by me to the effect that

¹ Mr. Goschen.

because there are 85 Nationalist members in this House, you must do whatever they demand; and, treating it in that way and having created this phantom, it is easy enough to show that it is a most formidable proposition. He spent a long time in showing the most portentous consequences to which it would lead. Yes, sir, but that is not the argument so far as I used it; it was not the argument so far as I have heard it. What I ventured to say was this—that the deliberate and constitutional expression of the wishes of Ireland through the vast majority of her members entails upon this House the duty and the obligation of a respectful and a favorable consideration of every wish that Ireland may entertain consistently with the interests and the integrity of the empire. My right honorable friend said there was a parity in principle between Ireland and Scotland. I entirely agree with him. His experience as a Scotch member is short. If the vast majority of Scotchmen demand something on the ground that Scotch feeling and opinion show that it is essentially required in order to satisfy the just wishes of Scotland, I would advise my right honorable friend, if he wishes to be consistent with regard to the integrity of the empire, not to put himself in conflict with those expressions of opinion.

Then, sir, my right honorable friend said that no analogy could be drawn—and so said my noble friend the member for Rossendale—from the proceedings of the Protestant Parliament of Grattan. What was the meaning of all this? I have been arguing and others have argued that Grattan's Parliament showed no tendency and no disposition toward a separation of the kingdoms, and that Grattan himself looked upon the separation of the Parliaments as a means of uniting the hearts of the people.

That has been met by the statement now that that was a Protestant Parliament and a landlords' Parliament. Sir, if that is the way to make a Parliament safe and sound, if to re-introduce religious disabilities, if to narrow the franchise, if to centre power in the hands of the landlords, or if you are to go further and fill more than half the benches of Parliament with pensioners and placemen, then, if these are the elements of safety in a Parliament, in what gross and woful error have we been in this Parliament for half a century. We have been breaking down the exclusive power of class; we have been widening the franchise over the whole kingdom and effacing from the statute book one by one—until the very last perhaps is contained in this bill—every vestige of religious disability. There is no faith in the people with those who make these declarations. Their faith seems to be in shutting out the people, and in regarding popular influence as a source of danger. In this happy country we have found it a source of strength; and the enterprise we are now engaged in is to see whether we cannot also find security for it in Ireland that it shall be to her a similar source of strength under circumstances happier than those of her history heretofore.

My right honorable friend seems to sum up the misdeeds of the Irish people in an emphatic question—"In what country except Ireland would a no rent manifesto have been produced?" That is the inquiry which he puts. My first observation upon it is this—in what country except Ireland can you show so lamentable, so deplorable a history—a history so disgraceful to those who had any hand in bringing it about—and relations so deplorable between those who owned the land and those

who occupied it? The speech of my right honorable friend appeared to proceed upon the assumption that there were ineradicable and incurable vices in Irishmen which placed them in a category different from the people of other nations—that they had a sort of double dose of original sin. Is it to be wondered at that the notions of Irishmen should to some extent be gone awry upon the subject of land and the relations connected with it when you bear in mind that the Devon Commission, appointed by a Tory government, reported that the agricultural population of Ireland were called upon to bear, and that they did bear, with admirable and exemplary patience, sufferings greater than those which fell to the lot of any other people in Europe? Are you so ignorant as to suppose, when these sufferings had been borne for generations, I may say for centuries, as disclosed to the world on the highest authority, and when attempt after attempt to apply something like a remedy to the miseries that existed from the operation of the land laws in Ireland had failed through the narrow jealousy and selfishness of a class—that these things could pass without leaving a mark in history? Does my right honorable friend think that these things can pass and set their mark upon history, and yet leave no mark in the nature and disposition and habits of men who have been sufferers under such abominations?

My right honorable friend thinks my analogy with foreign countries is bad; that Austria and Hungary, Norway and Sweden, have nothing to do with these things. But my statement has been entirely misapprehended. I will recall the terms of it for the benefit of the right honorable gentleman. I never said that the analogy was exact, that

the circumstances were exactly parallel. What I said was that the circumstances were such as would show that we are called upon in this country to do, with infinitely greater advantages, what they have done in the face of infinitely greater difficulties. My right honorable friend appears to think it a difficulty in our way that we have got an Imperial Parliament and a greater number of subordinate local parliaments related to the British Empire. My point is that there is not in Sweden a supremacy of the Swedish Parliament over Norway; that there is not in Austria a supremacy of the Austrian Parliament over Hungary, and that, even without the advantage of such supremacy, the problem has in those countries been solved in substance, and that, in the case of Norway and Sweden particularly, by the adoption of the simple expedient of granting a domestic legislature and practical local independence, the union of the two countries, which at one time seemed hopeless and impossible, has become close, and is growing closer from day to day. Then how is it that these illustrations have no bearing upon the great problem that we have before us?

Again, my right honorable friend states as a difficulty that our interests are so interlaced with Ireland. I am astonished to hear that observation called upon to pass muster and do duty among the arguments against this bill. Why, if our interests are so interlaced—and I thank God it is true that they are so interlaced—is not that in itself a strong presumption of the extreme unlikelihood that Irishmen will overlook that interlacing and proceed as if we were perfectly independent, as if they had nothing to do with us, no benefit to derive from us, and no injury to suffer from injury to us? No! the truth

is this. It is assumed—and this is the basis of the speech of my right honorable friend—that the Irishman will do wrong, and that there is no way of making him listen to the dictates of prudence, of kindness, of justice, of good sense, except by taking into your own hands the reins by which you can govern him and teaching him how he shall walk. On that principle it is that my right honorable friend went over all the different classes of subjects, and described the dreadful changes that everything was to undergo; legislation was to be changed, administration was to be changed, the civil service was to be changed, the face of nature itself was to be changed. Such is the terrible picture. And why? Is there no common-sense among that portion of our fellow-countrymen?

The speech of my right honorable friend recalled to my memory a striking sentence of Lord Russell's fifty years ago, which implanted itself deeply on my memory at the time, and which I have never forgotten, and I hope never shall forget. It was at the time when, under the administration of the Melbourne government, Mr. Thomas Drummond was Under-Secretary for Ireland, and when with singular success he was endeavoring to conduct the Irish administration, so far as he could, in sympathy with the feelings of the people. His misdeeds, as I suppose I must call them, found their climax in the utterance of the portentous doctrine which shocked Conservatism from Land's End to John o' Groats—he had the audacity to say that "property had its duties as well as its rights." The corresponding misdeeds of Mr. Drummond, and in some sense of the Lord Lieutenant, caused many debates in this House, in which I am thankful to say I took no part, but to which I was an attentive listener. Every sort

of objection and accusation was brought forward against the proceedings of the Irish Government of that day; and Lord Russell, in his quiet way, rising to take part in a debate, said—"It appears to me that all these objections, all these difficulties, and all these accusations"—I may not be quoting every word accurately, but I am very near the mark—"may be summed up in one single sentence. It comes, sir, to this—that as England is inhabited by Englishmen, and Scotland by Scotchmen, so Ireland is inhabited by Irishmen." Lord Russell knew very well that Irishmen did not come here to conquer us 700 years ago, but that we went to Ireland to conquer—we favored Irishmen with our company, we have been all along the stronger party of the two, and it is one of the uniform and unfailing rules that guide human judgment, if not of the moment yet of history, that when a long relation has existed between a nation of superior strength and one of inferior strength, and when that relation has gone wrong, the responsibility and the guilt rests in the main upon the strong rather than upon the weak.

My right honorable friend asked me questions as to the provisions of this bill, and I must confess my surprise at some of them, coming as they do from one who is an old official hand. They were questions most proper to be asked—perhaps on the second reading of a bill—certainly in committee, but I have never heard of such questions upon the motion for leave to introduce a bill. If questions of that kind are to be asked, why, sir, this House ought to alter its rules and give an honorable member applying for leave to introduce a bill the power of laying it upon the table of the House before it is read a first time. For example, my right honorable friend asked a question about

the veto. Well, sir, we have stated with regard to that point that there is no limitation to the veto in the bill, and, if the right honorable gentleman asks my opinion, my opinion is that the principle upon which the veto is now worked—if the right honorable gentleman will take the trouble to read the valuable work ("The Law of the Constitution") of Professor Dicey, to which I have before referred, he will find a most careful and interesting elucidation of the subject—the principle upon which the veto is now worked in the great colonial dependencies of this country—though I do not admit that Ireland will be reduced to the *status* of a colony—I believe that principle to be applicable for all practical purposes to Ireland with a domestic legislature.

Then my right honorable friend asked a question about the levying of the income tax. He did not seem to have even a very elementary idea of what the Irish income tax would be, and he asked where the dividends would be payable, whether the dividends would be payable in London or in Dublin. Why, sir, no such questions can possibly arise under this bill as the bill stands. The Irish income tax will be just as distinct from the income tax of England and Scotland as if it were a French income tax. Well, I will give you another illustration, as if it were an Indian income tax. From time to time they have in India the blessing of an income tax; but in India the whole machinery, the incidence of the tax, the liability to pay it, are all as totally distinct from the tax in this country as if the income tax there were laid in another planet.

My right honorable friend finally laid very much stress on the case of the United States of America. He pointed out that insidious advisers recommended the Northern

States not to insist upon the maintenance of the Union, but that they did insist on the maintenance of the Union, and carried their point. Why, true, sir; but having carried their point, what did they do? Having the Southern States at their feet, being in a position in which they were entitled to treat them as conquered countries, they invested every one of them with that full autonomy, a measure of which we are now asking for Ireland. I say a measure of which autonomy, because I believe that their autonomy is much fuller than that which we are now asking for Ireland.

Well, sir, I may say some words more. My right honorable friend said—I am not quite sure whether my right honorable friend said so, but certainly my noble friend, the member for Rossendale did—that these enactments if carried would lead to further demands from Ireland. That is a favorable objection. The right honorable gentleman [Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, the leader of the Opposition] who has just sat down has been extremely cautious in this matter, and he has promised Ireland—I hope I am not misrepresenting him—almost nothing except a reasonable allowance of repressive criminal legislation. The phantom of local government and a little control over education and public works, and such things, find no place whatever in the speech of the leader of the Opposition, but they find a place in the speech of my right honorable friend behind me, and of my noble friend the member for Rossendale. Well, sir, we are going to give to the Irish people—if we are permitted—that which we believe to be in substantial accordance with their full, possible, and reasonable demands. In our opinion that is the way to stop further demands.

I should like to quote Mr. Burke—and I hope we shall hear much of Mr. Burke in the course of this discussion—for the writings of Mr. Burke upon Ireland, and still more upon America, are a mine of gold for the political wisdom with which they are charged, applicable to the circumstances of to-day, full of the deepest and most valuable lessons to guide the policy of a country. He was speaking for conciliation with America, and those to whom he was preaching in vain met him with this idle cavil that his conciliation would tend to further demands. They refused this conciliation, but further demands came, and they were granted—with hands dyed in blood, and after hundreds of millions had been added to our national debt, and when disparagement, at the very least, of England's fame went through the length and breadth of the world in connection with that wretched consummation—were granted, leaving behind them in America an inheritance, not of goodwill or affection such as now prevails, but of rancor and resentment which for generations were not effaced, and which were the happy consequences of a courageous resistance. I am not afraid, sir, of the same consequences in the same form. There is no question of war with Ireland, but it is a question of what I care for more than anything else—the character, the honor, and the fair fame of my country; it is a question of humanity, of justice, and of a desire to make atonement for a long—a too long—series of former, and not yet wholly forgotten, wrongs. Now, sir, what did Mr. Burke say on that occasion when he was advocating conciliation with America? He said that the more and the better state of liberty any people possessed, the less would they hazard in the vain attempt to make it more.

What are the proposals of my noble friend? They are:

First a little dose of coercion, and next a grudging gift to Ireland of such self-government as England and Scotland may be pleased to choose for themselves. Now I deny the justice of the principle that self-government in Ireland is necessarily to be limited by the wishes of England and Scotland for themselves. Upon what basis of justice does that argument rest? Why may not Ireland have specialities in her case which England and Scotland may not have? We have no right to say that what England wants and Scotland wants Ireland may have, but nothing else. You must show that what Ireland wants is mischievous before you are justified in refusing her. I am speaking now of the favorite topic of "further demands." Was there ever a device more certain to prolong all the troubles of Parliament? Was there ever a system of policy less hopeful of attaining any solid standing-ground than this proposal to dole out to Ireland from year to year with grudging and misgiving, and with a frank statement that it is a dangerous business, that which she does not want, and which, if she accepts at all, she will only accept for the purpose of making further demands? It was denied in very clear language by the Irish representatives that they sought to press forward from this measure to other measures. They claim, and very fairly and reasonably claim—because no member of Parliament could divest himself of the right—to examine in committee the provisions of the bill, and to demand this or that amendment. But they have expressly disclaimed the intention to make what my noble friend calls further demands. Let him put to them the same question, and ask them for the same assurances, as to the proposals made in this debate by a most distinguished person [Sir M. Hicks-Beach]—one who, unfor-

tunately, I know only three years ago declared that there should be no extension of local government until the Irish members made a total change in their methods of speech and action. No doubt measures doled out in the shape of municipal corporations here and there would be certain to be used for the purpose of making further demands. I commend the consistency and caution of the right honorable gentleman, the leader of the Opposition, because he fairly told us at the commencement of the session [January 21], when he was asked what boons would be given to Ireland in the way of local government, that no enlargement of the powers of local government should be given which might be used as a lever to weaken and destroy the legislative union, or (as he went on to say) enable the political majority to tyrannize over the minority. A very sensible, a very consistent course. If you grant some small modicum of local government, it would simply be a device for securing perpetual disturbance of this Parliament from year to year by Irish members, and they would strengthen the leverage with which they would use those demands and advance them to their natural consummation.

My noble friend complains that this was a question which had not been referred to the people. I should like to know what is the upshot of that observation. What does it mean? I think it can hardly mean anything else than this—that the government had committed a fault in bringing forward this question at the present time because it had not brought the matter under public consideration at the general election. It seems to me that that is an extraordinary doctrine. I want to know where it is to be found laid down by any constitutional authority. My honorable friend the Attorney-General [Sir Charles Russell] asked

whether there was any mandate for coercion. No, sir, there was no mandate for coercion, and you cannot want a mandate for any measures necessary to maintain the law. Very well, sir; but if you do not want a mandate for the measures of force and repression, intended to maintain the law, much less do you want a mandate for measures intended to maintain and strengthen the law by laying hold of the hearts of the people, and which aim at no force and no repression, but at a union far closer and more durable than that which now exists on the statute book.

I do not know whether my noble friend has given much attention to the case of the Reform Act, but it is a rather curious one from this point of view. The election of 1830 was conducted almost entirely without reference to the subject of reform. At that time the election extended over very many weeks, and it was only just before it had quite finished—and the Yorkshire election, if I recollect rightly, was about the last—that those great events occurred in Paris which produced a sympathetic effect here and roused a cry for reform in England, but in the main the Parliament was elected without the least reference to reform. Yes, sir; but when that Parliament met, and when it was found that the wants of the country required reform, although it was denounced as revolution—and I can assure honorable gentlemen opposite that all their invectives are weak and ineffective in comparison—Parliament set about its work manfully; the government proposed to Parliament, and Parliament entertained, the great proposal then laid before it. It would be a very different thing, indeed, if my colleagues who have spoken in the debate had evaded the real issue, or had declared that the question was unfit to come

before us. I never uttered an opinion, nor shall I utter an opinion, that it is a subject unfit to come before the people; I think we who propose this bill should be the last persons who should be jealous of any reference to the people.

Coming now to the proposals of my right honorable friend the member for West Birmingham, in the first place, let me say that I at once accord to him—what, however, he cannot want according from me—that is, his perfect and entire good faith in the representations that he made, upon which a misapprehension prevailed between us, as to his title to enter upon certain matters. If anything further is required upon that point, it certainly can keep until Friday next, when the bill on the land question is brought forward. Quite irrespective of the land law, my right honorable friend stated four points, any one of which was an ample justification of the step which he felt himself called upon to take. But he, at any rate, gave no countenance to coercive legislation. He looks into the future, and he sees how light and trivial is the talk about coercive legislation. But my right honorable friend went a great deal further, and suggested a commission or committee, to be formed of all parties, to deal with this subject. I will not criticise that proposal. I venture the opinion that no solution of the question will ever proceed from a royal commission or a committee composed of all parties, much less pass through Parliament. Then my right honorable friend spoke of federation. If you are to have federation there must be somebody to federate, and there will be nobody, except a legislative body is entitled to act for the people. It appears to me that my right honorable friend goes further than we do, because he is in favor of not only giving a domestic legislature, but of appending to it that rather formidable post-

script of some arrangement under which this Parliament is to part with some of its powers and throw them into the common stock along with powers coming from other portions of the empire. I cannot, therefore, say that he has remained behind us in this matter.

What is really material to observe is the mutual relations of harmony and concord subsisting between the plans of those who think they ought to sink differences and unite together for the purpose of finding a solution for the Irish problem. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his masterly statement, exhibited in full detail the relations actually subsisting among those most distinguished gentlemen and great parliamentary authorities. He has shown that the Border Burghs does not agree with Birmingham, and that Birmingham does not agree with Rossendale, and that Rossendale does not agree with Paddington, and, again, Edinburgh is distinct in shade from them all. There is a decided want of common feature, common action, common purpose, common principle; there is no united basis of action except the basis of hostility to this bill.

When I speak of this plan, I speak of it as a plan in its essence and not in its detail. It may derive much advantage from the wisdom of Parliament. It has been produced and brought to light under a degree of pressure such as I believe never was applied by circumstances to any government, such at least, I will venture to say, as there is no case of in the half-century to which my recollection extends. It may be improved by the wisdom of this House, but speaking of it as a plan, I say it holds the field. It has many enemies; it has not a single rival. No one has been bold enough to propose an intelligible system of what, in my opening statement, I called effectual coercion—the only

kind of coercion that can be adequate to the end you have in view. And, sir, as the plan holds the field, the subject holds the field. Never, I think, have I witnessed such signs of public absorption in this House and out of this House. And, sir, it is safe to prophecy that the subject will continue to hold the field. Many who are here advocate important reforms; many think, and I am one of them, that legislation is in arrear. The demands upon your time and thought are beyond your capacity, even with your best exertions, to meet. But, sir, you may dismiss all these subjects from your mind until this matter is disposed of, until the Irish problem is solved. I am not speaking of what gentlemen opposite may threaten or say; I am looking at the nature of the case; I am looking at the profound interest of the whole English and Scotch people, ay, and of the whole civilized world. Until this problem is solved it is idle to think of making real progress with the business of this country, in respect to the important subjects which are perfectly ripe for the handling of Parliament. We have come to the time for decisive action; we have come to the time for throwing aside not only private interests and partial affections, but private devices and partial remedies. We have come to the time for looking at the whole breadth of this subject and endeavoring to compass it in our minds. We have come to the time when we must answer this question—whether we will make one bold attempt to free Parliament for its great and necessary work, and to establish harmony by Irish laws for Ireland, or whether we will continue, on the other hand, to struggle on as we have done before, living from hand to mouth, leaving England and Scotland to a famine of needful and useful legislation, and Ireland to a continuance of social disease, the depth of

which we have never understated, of social disease that you do not know how to deal with, and of angry discord with Great Britain, which you make no attempt to cure.

HOME RULE

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MAY 20, 1886

SIR—I was the latest of the members of this House who had an opportunity of addressing the House in the debate on the introduction of this bill; yet I think no one will be surprised at my desiring to submit some observations in moving the second reading. And this on the double ground—First of all, because unquestionably the discussion has been carried on since the introduction of the bill throughout the country with remarkable liveliness and activity; and, secondly, because so many criticisms have turned on an important particular of the bill with respect to which the government feel it to be an absolute duty on our part that we should, without any delay whatever, render to the House the advantage of such explanations as, consistently with our public duty, it may be in our power to make.

I am very sorry to say that I am obliged to introduce into this speech—but only I hope to the extent of a very few sentences—a statement of my own personal position in regard to this question, which I refrained from mentioning to the House at the time when I asked for leave to bring in the bill. But I read speeches which some gentlemen opposite apparently think it important to make to their constituencies, and which contain statements so entirely erroneous

and baseless that, although I do not think it myself to be a subject of great importance and relevancy to the question, yet as they do think it to be so, I am bound to set them right, and to provide them with the means of avoiding similar errors on future occasions. Although it is not a very safe thing for a man who has been for a long time in public life—and sometimes not very safe even for those who have been for a short time in public life—to assert a negative, still I will venture to assert that I have never in any period of my life declared what is now familiarly known as Home Rule in Ireland to be incompatible with imperial unity. ["Oh, oh!"] Yes; exactly so. My sight is bad, and I am not going to make personal references; but I dare say the interruption comes from some member who has been down to his constituents and has made one of those speeches stuffed full of totally untrue and worthless matter.

I will go on to say what is true in this matter. In 1871 the question of Home Rule was an extremely young question. In fact, Irish history on these matters in my time has divided itself into three great periods. The first was the Repeal period under Mr. O'Connell, which began about the time of the Reform Act and lasted until the death of that distinguished man. On that period I am not aware of ever having given an opinion; but that is not the question which I consider is now before us. The second period was that between the death of Mr. O'Connell and the emergence, so to say, of the subject of Home Rule. That was the period in which physical force and organizations with that object were conceived and matured, taking effect under the name generally of what is known as Fenianism. In 1870 or 1871 came up the question of Home Rule. In a speech

which I made in Aberdeen at that period I stated the great satisfaction with which I heard and with which I accepted the statements of the proposers of Home Rule, that under that name they contemplated nothing that was at variance with the unity of the empire.

But while I say this, do not let it be supposed that I have ever regarded the introduction of Home Rule as a small matter, or as entailing a slight responsibility. I admit, on the contrary, that I have regarded it as a subject of the gravest responsibility, and so I still regard it. I have cherished, as long as I was able to cherish, the hope that Parliament might, by passing—by the steady and the continuous passing of—good measures for Ireland, be able to encounter and dispose of the demand for Home Rule in that manner which obviously can alone be satisfactory. In that hope undoubtedly I was disappointed. I found that we could not reach that desired point. But two conditions have been always absolute and indispensable with me in regard to Home Rule. In the first place, it was absolutely necessary that it should be shown, by marks at once unequivocal and perfectly constitutional, to be the desire of the great mass of the population of Ireland; and I do not hesitate to say that that condition has never been absolutely and unequivocally fulfilled, in a manner to make its fulfilment undeniable, until the occasion of the recent election.¹ It was open for any one to discuss whether the honorable member for Cork—acting as he acted in the last Parliament, with some forty-five members—it was open to any one to question how far he spoke the sentiments of the mass of the Irish population. At any rate, it is quite

¹ When, out of 103 members, 85 Home Rulers were returned.

evident that any responsible man in this country, taking up the question of Home Rule at that time, and urging the belief that it was the desire of the mass of the Irish population, would have been encountered in every quarter of the House with an incredulity that it would have been totally impossible for him to overcome. Well, I own that to me that question is a settled question. I live in a country of representative institutions; I have faith in representative institutions; and I will follow them out to their legitimate consequences; and I believe it to be dangerous in the highest degree, dangerous to the Constitution of this country and to the unity of the empire, to show the smallest hesitation about the adoption of that principle. Therefore that principle for me is settled.

The second question—and it is equally an indispensable condition with the first—is this, Is Home Rule a thing compatible or incompatible with the unity of the empire? Again and again, as may be in the recollection of Irish members, I have challenged, in this House and elsewhere, explanations upon the subject, in order that we might have clear knowledge of what it was they so veiled under the phrase, not exceptionable in itself, but still open to a multitude of interpretations. Well, that question was settled in my mind on the first night of this session, when the honorable gentleman, the leader of what is termed the Nationalist party from Ireland, declared unequivocally that what he sought under the name of Home Rule was autonomy for Ireland. Autonomy is a name well known to European law and practice, as importing, under a historical signification sufficiently definite for every practical purpose, the management and control of the affairs of the territory to which the word is applied, and as being perfectly com-

patible with the full maintenance of imperial unity. If any part of what I have said is open to challenge, it can be challenged by those who read my speeches, and I find that there are many readers of my speeches when there is anything to be got out of them and turned to account. I am quite willing to stand that test, and I believe that what I have said now is the exact and literal and absolute truth as to the state of the case.

I shall not dwell at any great length on the general argument in favor of the bill; but I will notice one or two points that have been taken, and which, if they do not express any very definite argument, yet give expression to feelings which are entitled on my part to deference and respect. A great objection which is felt by some honorable gentlemen is much to this effect—"Do not, in these great matters, experiment in politics; do not let us have this kind of legislation, uncertain as to its effect, involving great issues, and therefore liable to be marked—I may say stigmatized—by the name of experiment." Because, although in one sense every law is an experiment, yet I perfectly understand, and I am the first to admit, that experimenting in politics is a bad and dangerous practice. Now, what is experimenting in politics? If I understand it, it is the practice of proposing grave changes without grave causes. Is this a case in which there is no grave cause with which we have to deal? Why, sir, we have to deal with the gravest of all causes that can solicit the attention of a legislature—namely, the fact that we have to treat the case of a country where the radical sentiment of the people is not in sympathy with the law. I defy any man, be he an opponent or not, to deny that we have to deal with the case of a country where the radical senti-

ment of the people is not in sympathy with the law. Of course, I am making general assertions. I do not say that an action on a bill of exchange between debtor and creditor in Ireland could not be settled without reference to any international prejudice. I speak of the most important parts of the law—of those parts which touch agricultural relations, the one great standing, pervading employment and occupation of the country—I speak above all of the criminal law, of the very first exigencies of political society; and I will not argue the question whether the criminal law of Ireland, especially when it concerns agricultural relations, has or has not the sympathy of the people until I find some one who is ready to say, after all he knows about evictions, about the operations of the Land League, and about the verdicts of juries, that the criminal law in Ireland has the sympathy of the people. Not only is this a matter of fact, but it is a matter of fact with which we are constantly dealing, which has run through three generations of men, and that almost without intermission.

We have tried expedients. What has been our great expedient? Our great expedient has been that to which I admit *prima facie* a government will first and justifiably resort. Our first expedient has been that which is known as repression or coercion. Has that class of experiment, has that class of expedient, been successful? I argued this point at full length in introducing the bill, and I will not argue it now at any detail whatsoever. I will only make this one assertion, which I believe to be absolutely undeniable—namely, that this medicine of coercion, if it be a medicine, is a medicine which we have been continually applying in increasing doses with diminishing results. When a physician has before him such a phenomenon as

that he should direct his attention and his efforts to some other quarter and to some other method. We have—and I am glad to admit it—tried remedies. I see it stated sometimes that nothing has been so miserable a failure as the course of remedial legislation with respect to Ireland with which the members of the present government, and I myself for a long time, have been associated. I refer now to the removal of religious disabilities, to the disestablishment of the Church, to the reform of the Land Laws, and to the removal—or, if not the absolute removal, to the enormous mitigation—of the intolerable grievances, perhaps the worst of all after the land grievance, under which Ireland used to labor with respect to education.

If I am asked what I think of all these measures, I deny that they have failed. We have not failed, but we have not finished. They have had this effect—that the disease of Ireland has taken a different and a milder form. I am sorry to arouse scepticism whichever way I go. When I said just now that social order in Ireland was disturbed there were signs of dissent from honorable members opposite—and now when I say that the disease of Ireland has taken a milder form there are also signs of dissent, and it seems to me impossible that anything said by me can be true. My meaning is this—the disease of Ireland is in a milder form; but, in my opinion, it is in a form still extremely serious, and yet in a milder form than it took in 1832, when murders, excesses, and outrages were manifold to what they are now, so as to indicate a different state of things at the present time from what existed then and an undoubted growth of what are known as law-abiding habits—or I might go further back to the dreadful rebellion of 1798, which took a great effort on the part of this country

to put down. No, sir, that legislation has not failed. I admit that it is incomplete, that it has not reached, that it has not touched the goal, the terminating point of the race we had to run, and something yet remains to be done.

But there is another notion which has gone abroad. I have spoken of former expedients and remedies, but there is now a notion that something might be done by judicious mixtures of coercion and concessions. These judicious mixtures are precisely the very thing that we have tried. Go back to the Roman Catholic emancipation (1829). The Duke of Wellington made a judicious mixture upon that occasion. He proposed that we should open the doors of Parliament—and I am thankful he did so—to the Roman Catholics of Ireland, but he at the same time disfranchised the 40s. freeholder on the principle of judicious mixture. When Sir R. Peel in 1843–44 put Mr. O'Connell on his trial, and succeeded in obtaining in Ireland a conviction which was afterward quashed on a point of form that was a strong step in the direction of coercion—but he followed it up immediately by the important act (1845) for enlarging the endowment of Maynooth, by an act for facilitating the granting of charitable bequests to the Roman Catholic Church, and I must also say—although it may shock some honorable gentlemen opposite—by a third act, which was then viewed as a great boon to the Roman Catholic interest—namely, the act for the foundation of undenominational colleges. There was another case of judicious mixture. It happened when we were disestablishing the Church there was great disorder in Westmeath, and in the middle, I think, of the Land Bill, we arrested the progress of that measure and introduced a very strong

measure' of coercion for Westmeath, all on the principle of judicious mixture. The government which came into office in 1880 and which was put out of office in 1885—the whole course of that government was nothing but one of rigid and incessant effort of judicious mixtures. Therefore do not let us suppose that the merit of novelty attaches to that recommendation.

But I have seen another recommendation made, and made, I think, by a person of very great authority, I believe in my hearing, to the effect that if we could only cast away party spirit in dealing with Ireland we should do well. Then, I think, a good many honorable members opposite cheered, indicating that they were ready to cast away party spirit. What is meant by this? Is it meant that party spirit is to be expelled generally from the circuit of English politics? Is that so? Is there a dreamer who, in the wildness of his dreams, has imagined that you can really work the free institutions of this country upon any other principles than those in the main which your fathers have handed down to you and which have made the country what it is? Those cheers may be meant in sarcasm. I accept them in good faith. I believe that in uttering the words that I have just used I have quite as strong a meaning, and I am ready to act upon the principle which I have laid down quite as much, and perhaps a little more, than a great many honorable members opposite who cheered. It may be said, "We do not think you can get on altogether without party spirit, but do at any rate cast out party spirit from Irish affairs." Is that a more hopeful recommendation?

¹ The Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act, 1870.

It will be convenient to take the case of the two sides of the House separately, and first I ask is it desirable that the Tory party should cast out party spirit? I should say—undoubtedly. But if I should press it upon the right honorable gentleman opposite he would be entitled to make an answer to me which I should feel to be a crushing answer, because he would say, "Before you talk of casting away party spirit from the handling of Irish affairs you must show that it has been applied to those affairs in some sense different from, and in a more guilty and more mischievous manner than that in which it has been applied to other affairs." I will not speak of the last year or two, during which there may have been strong prejudices. I will go back half a century to the time when great resistance was offered, and I, as a humble and as a silent follower, had my share of responsibility for that resistance. I mean the resistance (1836–40) to the extension of the franchise in Ireland, especially of the municipal franchise. I deeply lament that opposition was ever offered; I may say *quorum pars exigua fui*. The conduct of the Tory party of that day, under Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington, Lord Stanley, and Sir James Graham, although very mistaken, was perfectly honest. I am not prepared to say that Irish affairs have been handled in this House, speaking generally, by either party with a larger admixture of party feeling or with a smaller flavor of true patriotic tone than other affairs of the country. It is idle to set up as remedies, as alternatives, and as policies to adopt in great crises these suggestions which are totally visionary and unreal, and which never could become the basis of human action in a legislative assembly.

So much for experiment. Here I stand upon the ground

that a great necessity is before us, that a growing and urgent evil requires to be dealt with, that some strong and adequate application to the case is requisite, and that the whole and the only question is whether the application we propose is the right one. Let me say this upon this particular question of a legislature for Ireland, that it appears to be a very popular topic with our opponents, who say, "Why do you depart from the course taken by all the statesmen of the nineteenth century?" Now, let us see what has been done and said by all "the statesmen of the nineteenth century." The great case produced is the famous Repeal debate in 1834, in which I myself was one of the majority who voted against the repeal of the Union. A very remarkable passage from a very remarkable speech of Sir Robert Peel, well deserving to be kept fresh in the memory of posterity, from its terseness and power, has again become familiar to the people of this day, as I myself heard it with my own ears that day, with admiration. What was Sir Robert Peel then doing? In the first place, he was opposing the repeal of the Union. You call this repeal of the Union. You must at least allow us to have an opinion on that subject. For my part, I am not prepared at this moment to say that the question of the repeal of the Union should be reopened. I may be right or wrong in that matter, but my opinion is that Ireland has done much, by wisdom and moderation, by bringing her essential demands within certain limits, to facilitate the task set before us. But even if this were repeal of the Union, I admit, without the least question, that up to a certain point the Union is upon its trial. I admit, without the least question, that in my opinion this bill constitutes a most important modification of that act. But was Sir

Robert Peel in the same circumstances in 1834 as we found ourselves in 1884? He had had one generation of experience; we have had nearly three. In the days when he spoke, the statute book of England was loaded with a mass of acts inflicting the most cruel grievances upon Ireland, and it was a perfectly rational opinion for a man like Lord Macaulay, who was deeply interested in Ireland, and other politicians of his character, to think that by the removal of those grievances you might save the Union. What was then a matter of reasoning and speculation has now become a matter of knowledge.

So Lord Macaulay is one who is quoted like Sir Robert Peel. I remember well a passage of splendid eloquence delivered by Lord Macaulay against the repeal of the Union, a Union of which I will not say anything more now than that I do not desire to rake up the history of that movement—a horrible and shameful history, for no epithets weaker than these can in the slightest degree describe or indicate ever so faintly the means by which, in defiance of the national sentiment of Ireland, consent to the Union was attained. I think in 1834, or not very distant from that date, Lord Macaulay, in words of burning eloquence, denounced the repeal of the Union. Macaulay, I think in 1859, or certainly many years later in his life, if not so late as that, in his *Life of Pitt*, declared that the Union without the measures which Mr. Pitt finally hoped to procure from it—and to which in fact it became the greatest impediment—without those measures the Union was union only in name, and being a union only in name, it was in rank opposition to all the national and patriotic sentiment of Ireland. How was it possible that its authority could commend itself to the people of that country? I do not admit that the question of

the Union, so far as it is now on its trial, has been decided, or has been touched, by statesmen of the nineteenth century. Those of whom I spoke never had before them what we have before us, the bitter fact, the rich though painful story of the experience which the rolling years of the last half century have afforded us.

Well, then, sir, we are told again with extraordinary boldness, "Why do you depart from the old Whig traditions?" If there is one thing more than another which my honorable friend the member for Bedford was doing in his admirable speech which he delivered on this subject, it was in showing that he was acting in strict consonance and conformity with the old Whig traditions. What were the old Whig traditions? The organs of that tradition were Mr. Sheridan and Lord Grey—the Lord Grey of that day—or rather the Mr. Grey of that day, afterward still more famous as Lord Grey. Then there were Lord Fitzwilliam, and, above all, Mr. Fox, and even above Mr. Fox himself there was Mr. Burke. Upon this great subject of the relations with Ireland Mr. Burke never modified by one hair-breadth the generous and wise declaration of his youth and of his maturer manhood. Mr. Burke did not live to the date of the Union, but he placed on record in the first place his political adhesion to the opinions of Mr. Grattan, and in the second place he placed upon record his full satisfaction with the state of things that prevailed in Ireland—the political state of things, especially the acts of 1782 and 1788,¹ and in a letter written not long before his lamented death, he said that he trusted that Ireland had seen the last of her revolutions. By that he meant that the act of 1782 did

¹ Whereby legislative independence was granted to Ireland.

amount to a revolution—a blessed and peaceful revolution, but still a revolution—a revolution effected by those peaceful means, by that bold and wise British statesmanship, such as in 1844, and again at a later period, was commended by Lord Beaconsfield.

It may be said with perfect truth that Lord Grey declined at a later date to be a party to the repeal of the Union. In that respect, in my opinion, he was perfectly consistent. For my own part, if I may refer to myself, I do not at all regret the vote which I gave fifty-two years ago against the repeal of the Union, considering what that repeal involved, and considering the amount of information we had with regard to its working. The Union, whatever may be our opinion with regard to the means by which it was obtained, was a statute of vast importance, for it modified and in many respects transformed the relations between Great Britain and Ireland. Such a statute as that cuts deep tracks in history; those tracks cannot be effaced in later times. But we are acting in most complete conformity with Whig traditions and the principles upon which Whig statesmen founded their action. They did not say that the principle of the Union between Great Britain and Ireland was abstractly bad; they did not say, "We in our minds are opposed to it, and therefore Ireland and Great Britain shall not have it"; but they said it was opposed to the sentiment of the Irish people. They said it was in opposition to all that was most honorable and upright, most respected, and most disinterested in Ireland, and nothing but mischief, nothing but disorder, nothing but dishonor, could come from a policy founded upon the overriding of all those noble qualities, and by means which would not bear the face of day, imposing the arbitrary will of the legislature

upon the nation, in spite of its almost unanimous opposition.

Now, sir, it should be borne in mind that there was at that time in existence the greatest difference of sentiment from what we now witness in Ireland. The north was more opposed to the Union probably than the south. I remember that the town of Cork used to be quoted as a spot on which love of the Union might be detected by the careful observer. Unquestionably the promises held out by Mr. Pitt did induce a division of sentiment among the Roman Catholic clergy of that time. I believe that the Irish national patriotic sentiment which I have mentioned with sympathy was more vivid in the north of Ireland than in any other quarter.

Well, sir, honorable gentlemen say, "Do not talk to us about foreign countries; do not talk to us about British colonies; do not mention Canada—it has nothing whatever to do with the case. Canada is loyal and content; Ireland is disloyal and disaffected." But Sir Charles Gavan Duffy in an able paper¹ admits the charge. He says: "When it was determined to confer Home Rule on Canada, Canada was in the precise temper attributed to Ireland. She did not get Home Rule because she was loyal and friendly, but she is loyal and friendly because she got Home Rule." Now, sir, I am on this subject able to speak as a witness. I sat in Parliament during the whole of the Canadian controversy [1834–40], and I even took, what was for me as a young member, an active part in the discussions upon the subject. And what was that Canadian controversy? The case of Canada is not parallel to the case of Ireland. It

¹ "Mr. Gladstone's Irish Constitution," in the "Contemporary Review," May, 1886.

does not agree in every particular, and the bill which we offer to Ireland is different in many important particulars from the acts which have disposed of the case of Canada. But although it is not parallel, it is analogous. It is strictly and substantially analogous. What, sir, was the issue in the case of Canada? Government from Downing Street. These few words embrace the whole controversy—government from Downing Street being, of course, under the government of St. Stephen's.

What was the cry of those who resisted the concession of autonomy to Canada? It was the cry which has slept for a long time, and which has acquired vigor from sleeping—it was the cry with which we are now becoming familiar—the cry of the unity of the empire. Well, sir, in my opinion the relation with Canada was one of very great danger to the unity of the empire at that time, but it was the remedy for the mischief, and not the mischief itself, which was regarded as dangerous to the unity of the empire. Here I contend that the cases are precisely parallel, and that there is danger to the unity of the empire in your relations with Ireland; but unfortunately, while you are perfectly right in raising the cry, you are applying the cry and the denunciation to the remedy, whereas you ought to apply it to the mischief.

In those days what happened? In those days habitually in this House the mass of the people of Canada were denounced as rebels. Some of them were Protestants, and of English and Scotch birth. The majority of them were Roman Catholic, and of French extraction. The French rebelled. Was that because they were of French extraction and because they were Roman Catholics? No, sir; for the English of Upper Canada did exactly the same thing.

They both of them rebelled, and perhaps I may mention—if I may enliven the strain of the discussion for a moment—that I remember Mr. O'Connell, who often mingled wit and humor with his eloquence in those days when the discussion was going on with regard to Canada, and when Canada was the one dangerous question—the one question which absorbed interest in this country as the great question of the hour—when we were engaged in that debate, Mr. O'Connell intervened, and referred to the well-known fact that a French orator and statesman named Papineau had been the promoter and the leader of the agitation in Canada; and what said Mr. O'Connell? He said: "The case is exactly the case of Ireland, with this difference, that in Canada the agitator had got the 'O' at the end of his name instead of at the beginning." Well, these subjects of her Majesty rebelled—were driven to rebellion and were put down. We were perfectly victorious over them, and what then happened? Directly the military victory was assured—as Mr. Burke told the men of the day of the American war—the moment the military victory was assured the political difficulty began. Did they feel it? They felt it; they gave way to it. The victors were the vanquished, for if we were victors in the field we were vanquished in the arena of reason. We acknowledged that we were vanquished, and within two years we gave complete autonomy to Canada. And now gentlemen have forgotten that great lesson of history. By saying that the case of Canada has no relation to the case of Ireland, I refer to that little sentence written by Sir Charles Duffy, who himself exhibits in his own person as vividly as anybody the transition from a discontented to a loyal subject. "Canada did not get Home Rule because she was loyal and friendly, but she has

become loyal and friendly because she has got Home Rule."

Now I come to another topic, and I wish to remind you as well as I can of the definition of the precise issue which is at the present moment placed before us. In the introduction of this bill I ventured to say that its object was to establish, by the authority of Parliament, a legislative body to sit in Dublin for the conduct of both legislation and administration under the conditions which may be prescribed by the act defining Irish as distinctive from imperial affairs. I laid down five, and five only, essential conditions which we deemed it to be necessary to observe. The first was the maintenance of the unity of the empire. The second was political equality. The third was the equitable distribution of imperial burdens. The fourth was the protection of minorities. And the fifth was that the measure which we proposed to Parliament—I admit that we must stand or fall by this definition quite as much as by any of the others—that the measure should present the essential character and characteristics of a settlement of the question.

Well, sir, that has been more briefly defined in a resolution¹ of the Dominion Parliament of Canada, with which, although the definition was simpler than my own, I am perfectly satisfied. In their view there are three vital points which they hope will be obtained, and which they believe to be paramount, and theirs is one of the most remarkable and significant utterances which have passed across the Atlantic to us on this grave political question.

¹ "That . . . this House earnestly hopes that such measures will be adopted by the Imperial Parliament as will, while preserving the integrity and well-being of the empire, and the rights and status of the minority, be satisfactory to the people of Ireland, and as will permanently remove the discontent so long unhappily prevailing in that country."

["Oh! oh!"] I just venture to put to the test the question of the equity of those gentlemen. You seem to consider that these manifestations are worthless. Had these manifestations taken place in condemnation of the bills and policy of the government, would they have been so worthless?

A question so defined—for the establishment of a legislative body to have effective control of legislation and administration in Ireland for Irish affairs, and subject to those conditions about which, after all, there does not appear in principle to be much difference of opinion among us—that is the question on which the House is called upon to give a vote, as solemn and as important as almost, perhaps, any in the long and illustrious records of its history.

Sir, in the interval which has taken place since the introduction of the bill much discussion has arisen upon a variety of its particulars, which I am very far from grumbling at or complaining of. One of them, however, is exciting so much feeling that it is quite necessary that it should receive the notice of my colleagues and of myself in the present debate. I mean that which relates to the exclusion or disappearance—for it really can hardly be called an exclusion when it is rather desired and sought for by the parties themselves—of the Irish members from the benches of this House.

Now, sir, in this explanation which I am about to give, I do not address myself to those who are hostile to the principle of this bill. I wish with all my heart I could say something without vitally prejudicing the public interests involved in this measure, that would tend to reconcile or to abridge the differences between her Majesty's Government and a body of gentlemen with whom hitherto they

have had the happiness of acting in as perfect concord—allowing for ‘he necessary freedom of human opinion and the occasional differences that may arise—as ever consolidated together the different sections of the Liberal party. Unhappily, sir, while I have the most cordial respect for those gentlemen, I am not able to promise myself that they will listen with much interest to what I have got to say. There are others who, as I believe, accept not less cordially than her Majesty’s Government themselves what I have declared to be the principle of this bill, and who at the same time see greater difficulties than we do—though we have seen great difficulties all along, and I never represented this measure as one in which all the points were clearly indisputable. The case bristles with difficulties of detail throughout, which only require good will and patient intelligence to deal with, and different men feel them in different modes and different degrees.

What has happened, sir, is this. I do not deny the fact that many friends of this measure, whom we should be loth indeed to alienate, have taken strong objection to the provisions with respect to the future absence of Irish members from this House under two heads. In the first place, they recall a proposition which I myself stated very strongly in introducing the bill—namely, the great political principle that there ought not to be taxation without representation. In that I stated what was an obvious truth. It is quite evident that we never would enforce upon Ireland taxation without representation, and nothing but the consent of Ireland could have induced her Majesty’s Government to contemplate such a thing for a single moment. But many gentlemen—and I do not find fault with them—are not satisfied even with the consent of Ireland. Gentlemen will

recollect that though we now hear sometimes of persons being more popish than the Pope, and many phrases of that kind, the original phrase was *Hibernis ipsis Hiberniores*. The meaning of that phrase was this—that those English families, those portions of the English race, who went and planted themselves among the Irishry, after a moderate time became more Irish than the Irish themselves. We have had that illustrated wholesale on the present occasion. I must own that this is a difficulty which I regard with respect and with sympathy, and I trust that in any attempt to meet it I shall have the sympathy of the House in general—at all events, of those who can on any terms tolerate the principle of this bill. Besides that objection—which is an objection strictly upon argumentative and constitutional grounds as respects taxation—there is undoubtedly another sentiment more vague, less definite, in a different region of the human mind; there is a sentiment of regret that there should cease to be a symbolical manifestation of the common concern of Ireland with ourselves in the unity of the empire, and in the transaction of imperial affairs.

Well, now, sir, how do we stand with regard to this case? First of all, let me say, however much it may appear to be a paradox to English members, yet history undoubtedly teaches us that, to whatever cause it may be due, foreign affairs, what I may call over-sea affairs, do not stand in exactly the same relations to Ireland as they do to England and Scotland. This is what I mean—I am not raising any disputable proposition—I mean the feeling of the people; and it appears to me perfectly natural that the inhabitants of a country like Ireland, whose difficulties have been so great, whose woes have been innumerable, whose hopes have been intermittent and continually disappointed

—the history of a country like that must throw back the mind of the people upon itself and its own concerns, and in that way it is that I can understand why it is that Irish gentlemen do now—what we all do if we are men of common-sense in the common affairs of life—that is, we look to the principle, and do not think so much about objects which in our view are secondary as that which is central and essential, that which is central and essential being the management of Irish affairs. What I am now going to say has not had so much notice as it deserves. Ireland is not so entirely excluded by the bill as it stands from imperial affairs as gentlemen may be disposed to think. I refer, and I by no means refer alone, to the principle which is contained in the 39th clause of the bill—the clause which provides for the recall of Irish representatives of both Houses before this House can proceed to any alteration of the statute upon which the two legislatures are not in accord. I hope that is a provision which there will be little, if any, occasion for putting into action. But the principle involved is an important principle.

Besides that, there is another clause which provides that in certain circumstances the Irish Assembly may vote sums of money in relation to subjects which are excluded from its ordinary cognizance. This provision has been misunderstood to mean that the Irish legislative body might in certain circumstances vote money for the establishment of a Church.

Well, sir, I have really not examined whether the words of the statute will bear such a construction as has been put upon them. But if they bear such a construction, undoubtedly an effectual remedy ought to be applied. The meaning of the words is simply this—our belief in drawing

the act was this—that it might be felt right in the event—as I trust the improbable—event of a great war, wherein this country and Ireland were engaged with a common feeling and common interest, for the crown to send a message to the Irish legislative body to ask them freely to testify their participation in our interests and privileges by voting money and supplies. [Laughter.] Some gentlemen differ from me as to the measure by which they estimate the ludicrous and the serious. My own estimates are sometimes in an inverse relation to theirs. What they think ludicrous seems to me to be serious, and possibly *vice versa*. It is supposed to be ridiculous that a practically independent body in Ireland—yes, practically independent in the regular exercise of its statutory functions—should entertain such a proposal. But it was not ridiculous when Ireland had an independent Parliament.

I said just now that it was a wonderful thing to see how little in other days Ireland had interposed in foreign affairs. I have had the debates looked up during the whole period of Grattan's Parliament, and if I except certain discussions relating to foreign treaties of commerce—I will speak of that matter by and by—there are only two occasions upon which that Parliament debated foreign affairs, so far as I can discover. Both of those occasions are occasions on which by message from the crown they were invited to vote sums of money for purposes of war. One of them was in 1790, when there was a seizure of British vessels by Spanish men-of-war. A vote of money was then asked and was given. The second was in 1795, when a contribution was asked toward the expenses of the French War. On the first occasion the Irish Parliament granted the money without question. I do not believe myself that

pecuniary illiberality has ever been a vice of Ireland. On the second occasion they granted it, but moved an amendment, full, I think, of good sense, hoping for a speedy conclusion of hostilities. For my part, I heartily wish that prayer of the Irish Parliament had been complied with. I take blame to myself for not having explained to the House the provision to which I have just referred—namely, the provision for the voting of money by the Irish legislative body in answer to the message from the crown. But my right honorable friend the Chief Secretary—Mr. John Morley—will bear me out when I say that after I had spoken I remarked to him that I regretted the omission of which I had been guilty.

Moreover, sir, although the statute will limit the legislative powers of the Irish legislative body, there are other moral powers of influence which it will possess, and which we do not and cannot limit. The privilege of free speech is not going to be taken away from Ireland—that privilege of free speech will attach to the members of this legislative body and to the legislative body collectively, and a considerable influence may be exercised upon proceedings at Westminster through resolution and by address from the legislative body.

However, sir, while I wish these provisions to be understood, I do not mean to limit what I have to say by reference to them. I wish to say what her Majesty's Government have thought to be their duty with regard to the feeling which has been copiously expressed in many portions of the country by gentlemen friendly to the principle of the bill. Undoubtedly it is our plain duty to consider how far we can go without prejudice to the main purpose of the bill to meet that desire. We shall do that upon

grounds of policy, and upon grounds of principle. We shall make willing steps in that direction as far as duty will permit us to go. There are three things which I had better at once say we cannot do, and are unwilling to entertain in any shape. We are not willing to break up the parliamentary traditions of this House, or to introduce a principle of confusion into the working of the House. That is the first. The second is, we are not willing to fetter against its will the action of the Irish legislative body in any case except where cardinal and imperial interests require it. We will do nothing that shall have the effect of placing our measure in such a condition that Ireland, through her representatives, can only offer to it a qualified and a grudging, instead of a free, cordial assent and acceptance. And, third, we can do nothing that will have the effect of placing the committee of the bill before the second reading. That may be a phrase mysterious to some, but the meaning of it is this—that to determine in detail, even if upon points of importance, everything which is of great interest touching this bill, before you obtain assent to the principle of the bill, is not practicable; and if it be practicable, the rules of this House are based upon folly, for undoubtedly it would be much more convenient in many respects, before you are called upon to assent to the principle of a bill, to have it in the exact form in which it is to be finally adopted.

There is another thing to be considered, and it is this. It has very often happened to me in the course of a great experience in parliamentary legislation, that you hold communications with one class of gentlemen—you happen to be good-tempered or bad-tempered as the case may be—you feel a great desire to meet the views of that class of gentlemen,

and you unwarily pledge yourself to propose the thing they desire. It is settled within the four walls of a private room. Then you come into this House, which happily—I thank God for it—is the place of the most thorough publicity in the whole world, and you find other sets of persons, quite as much entitled to be heard, who are at daggers drawn with the first. But the government has unwarily committed itself; and a quarrel ensues, while it is perfectly possible that if they had been allowed to reserve their discretion, and freely to consider the particulars in the committee, they might have been able to find means to conciliate those of opposite views, so as to bring about general satisfaction. What I mean is this, and I think the House will agree with me—I admit that when a thing is right, and when you see it to be practicable, you may promise before the second reading of a bill that if agreeable to the House you will do it. But we cannot do more than promise a fair consideration hereafter to a fair proposal, unless it is such a proposal as we can see our way to embodying in a workable shape. I do not think that is an unfair proposal. In violation of these three conditions we can do nothing. But we are ready and willing to do everything that they will allow.

Then I take the first objection that has been made to the proposed exclusion of the Irish representatives from this Parliament. It is that the principle that representation should accompany taxation would thereby be violated. Now what I am about to say involves a considerable responsibility; but the question whether and how far the difficulty may be met has been considered, and I am prepared to say that we can give full satisfaction to those who advance this objection. If agreeable to the

House, we will meet it in committee by providing that when a proposal is made to alter the taxation in respect of customs and excise, Irish members shall have an opportunity of appearing in this House to take a share in the transaction of that business. It will then be impossible to urge against the bill that it is proposed by the government that representation should not accompany taxation.

In regard to such matters of common interest between Great Britain and Ireland as those which form the subject of foreign treaties, no doubt the objections urged from some quarters may be met in some considerable degree by the adoption of a system of executive communications, which is the system adopted in certain foreign countries. There are cases in which two countries are disunited in their legislatures, but united in national action and feeling. They find themselves able, by executive communications, to provide for the common handling of common subjects. But we do not feel that the plan of executive communications need of necessity be the only one. There are various plans which have been proposed in order to indicate and maintain common action on imperial subjects, and which are well worthy of consideration. For example, it has been proposed that a joint commission should be appointed representing the Houses of Parliament on this side of the water, and representing the Irish legislative body in due proportion of members, and that that commission should meet from time to time as occasion might arise during the session of Parliament to consider common questions and report their opinions to both legislative bodies upon many, at any rate, of the imperial matters that are reserved by the bill as it stands. I hesitate to

say upon "any" of those questions, for I incline to the belief, for example, that the question relating to the succession of the crown—in all the different branches of the subject—ought not to go to any secondary authority. But I can conceive that many subjects, such, for example, as treaties of commerce, might well be considered by a commission of this kind. I do not say of this plan as absolutely as I do of the plan as to taxation, that we are quite ready to propose it if it be the wish of Parliament, for it has been little canvassed, and objections may be raised to it which we have failed to anticipate: but I can say that we look at the proposal as one which might satisfy jealousies, might have other advantages, and is not open, so far as we know, to serious objection.

Another proposal is that a joint committee of the kind which I have described could be appointed to consider how far and upon what conditions other than those provided in the statute Irish members should come here. There is yet another suggestion, that Irish members might be entitled to come to Parliament—I assume generally that corresponding opportunity would be given to Irish peers—upon occasions when the legislative body should, by an address to the crown, have expressed a desire that they should do so. I do not say that that is open to objection on principle. At the same time, I see considerable difficulties as to the particular way of making it a practicable plan. I will, however, state broadly that it is our duty to give an unprejudiced ear to proposals which others may make for the purpose of insuring the continued manifestation of common interest between Great Britain and Ireland in imperial concerns. That end, we say distinctly, is a good end; means for attaining it we regard with favor, subject to the condi-

tion that they shall not be so handled as to introduce into this House the principle of confusion, nor so handled as to impose on the Irish legislative body limitations of its liberty in any matters except such as affect high imperial policy. (Lord R. Churchill asked whether the Irish members would reappear in their full numbers.) I am much obliged to the noble lord. The clause now in the bill contemplating the recall of the Irish representatives in a certain contingency makes no difference from the present arrangements as to the numbers in which they would come. We do not feel that the subject involves a vital principle, nor have we arrived at any binding decision; but my own personal opinion is that if we were to bring back the Irish members in any other numbers than the present we should first have to devise a new system of election, and I am not sure that it would be wise to complicate the matter in that way. I should be inclined to hope that, so far as it is desirable that Irish members should reappear in Parliament, the Irish people would be liberally and amply, rather than scantily and jealously, represented.

There is only one other subject to which I must advert. We propose a change of which, if viewed as an abstract and speculative change, the postponement for a year or even longer would not have been a matter of vital consequence. But this concession, if you like to call it so—in my view it is something much higher than a concession, it is a great reformation and improvement—this change is not proposed upon grounds of general expediency alone, or in the view of abstract improvement alone; it is proposed in order to meet the first necessity of civilized society. Social order is not broken up in Ireland, it is undermined, it is sapped, and by general and universal confession it imperatively re-

quires to be dealt with. It is because this measure is one for the restoration of social order by the removal, not merely of the symptoms but of the cause of the mischief, that we recommend it to the consideration of Parliament. We are all agreed up to a certain point—(An honorable member: "No")—all except a solitary gentleman opposite. We all agree upon this, that social order in Ireland imperatively requires to be dealt with, but when we come to the method, then, unfortunately, our differences come into view. Were I to take all the individual opinions that have been expressed as to the mode of dealing with Irish questions, I should simply bewilder the House. I will only look at the main and leading divisions of power and influence in this assembly.

There are in the House two great parties, independently of the Irish party, and there is a third body, whom I will not call a party, because I am happy to think that as a party we are not yet divided from them, and I trust may never be. But we are vitally divided on this great and significant question from those whom I will not call a party, but whom I must call a body, but who are so important that they may possibly hold the balance and decide the question between the two great British parties in this House. The mass of the Irish representatives have committed in the eyes of many gentlemen opposite a new, a mortal offence—an offence more deadly than any former offence. They have committed the offence of agreeing with us in this matter. As long as their favors were bestowed in another quarter¹ great toleration was to be expected, and was

¹ The Council of Irish Nationalists called upon their fellow-countrymen in Great Britain to vote against the Liberals at the general election of November, 1885.

happily experienced, by them from those who are now very much shocked in their highest moral qualities at our alliance with the Irish party, which alliance amounts simply to a coincidence of views on a great vital and determining public question.

Of the two political parties in the House both have spoken and spoken plainly. I do, indeed I must, admire the tact, the caution, I will not say the astuteness, with which most of the leaders of the Tory party have abstained from overmuch hurrying themselves with forecasts of the future, or pledges as to the mode of meeting it, with regard to the Irish question. Finding that they had on this side of the House allies—I do not use the word in an invidious sense, it is the same kind of alliance that there is with gentlemen from Ireland—that is to say, it is an honorable and conscientious coincidence of opinion—finding that they had allies of that kind ready to do their work, with equal politeness and wisdom, they have left the doing of that work to them. But notwithstanding that, they have spoken and spoken plainly for themselves. When the noble lord the member for Paddington [Lord Randolph Churchill] was brought to the point, and when it was said he had not declared a policy, he pointed—and he was justified in pointing—not even to a phrase, but to a date, and he said: “Our policy is the 26th of January.”¹ I accept that reply from the noble lord. It is true and it is just, and that was, and that is, the declaration of policy for Ireland from the Tory party.

¹ On that day the late government gave notice that a bill would be introduced “for the purpose of suppressing the National League and other dangerous associations, for the prevention of intimidation and for the protection of life, property, and public order in Ireland.”

I remember, and many others may recollect, the fervid and almost endless cheering with which the gentlemen then sitting on this side of the House accepted the announcement of the 26th of January. That is a plain, manly, and straightforward announcement. What was it? The notice did not convey, and we could not expect that it should convey, a full description of the proposals that were to be made; but it so far described them that it indicated one point with perfect clearness, and that was the suppression of the National League. I may say, in parenthesis, that I trust that we shall be suppressors of the National League. That, if it comes about, will certainly be by a different process. The suppression of the National League—what does it mean and what does it come to?

A noble friend of mine [Earl Cowper], to whom I refer with the greatest respect, when he held office in Ireland, said: "We want to drive discontent under the ground." I own I thought at the time that that expression was what is called a slip of the tongue and I suppose there is no man among us who does not occasionally slip into that form of error. But if, instead of its being a slip of the tongue, it is exalted into a policy, then what is the meaning of the suppression of the National League? It is the conversion of the proceedings of that body—which I am not now called upon to discuss or characterize—it is the conversion of the proceedings of that body, taken daringly but openly in the face of day, into the proceedings of secret societies—the last resort in this and other countries of the extreme and hopeless difficulties of political problems; and, in my opinion, nothing is to be gained by procuring and bringing about the substitution of the secret communities for the open action of a body like the National League.

It is sought apparently to take away discontent from the surface. We are not contented with so limited an ambition. We desire to take away discontent neck and crop. We desire to abolish it root and branch, or, if I may once more put into requisition a phrase which had its day, we desire to abolish Irish discontent "bag and baggage." I do not believe that Parliament would pass a proposal for the abolition, in the present circumstances, of the National League. If it did pass such a proposal, in my opinion it is doubtful whether it would have made any contribution whatever to a real solution of the Irish difficulty; whether, on the contrary, it would not have administered a new aggravation to it. However that may be, I own that that party has spoken plainly, and their policy is summed up in the words "repression or coercion."

When this government was formed it was formed on the principle of looking for some method of dealing with Ireland other than by the method of coercion; and that policy has now taken definite form and shape in the proposal of autonomy for Ireland. You have spoken plainly and we have spoken plainly. Has the third power in the House spoken plainly? Has that power which is to hold the scales, and which may decide the issue, told the country in what manner, when it is forced to face this tremendous problem, it intends to deal with it?

There are few men in this House, I am sure there is no man outside of it, who does not admire the temper and the courage with which my noble friend the member for Rosendale has behaved on this question. In obedience to his conscience, and to his conscience alone, he has rent asunder with pain, and perhaps with agony, party ties to which he has been among the most faithful of all adherents. And

speaking generally of those who act with him, I believe that in their several spheres the same may be said of them. Nor do I feel, although I may lament that they have come under what I think are narrow and blind influences, that their titles to my respect are one whit diminished by what they have said or done. I make these admissions freely and without stint. My noble friend has assumed an immense responsibility. It is not for me to find fault with those who assume immense responsibility. My responsibility in this matter is perhaps even greater than his. Next to mine, and you will never find me here to extenuate it, I know no subject of her Majesty that has a greater load of responsibility upon him than my noble friend. I do not blame, I have no title to blame, him. All honor and praise to him for his undertaking the task which I know to be of enormous difficulty. But it may be a task of leading the determining and superior forces of parliamentary opinion toward a conclusion on the Irish question. If that is so, I ask what does he mean to do? Has not the time arrived when we ought to know what his policy is to be?

I have endeavored to search it out by such means as I could. Is it to be the policy announced to the Loyalist minority at Belfast in November last? (A Home Rule Member: "So-called 'Loyalist minority.'") I assume the phrase. In politics I like to give to every class of men the name by which they like to be called. Well, sir, in Belfast my noble friend made very considerable promises on the 5th of last November, and he said an extremely bold thing—"I should not shrink," he said, "from a great and bold reconstruction of the Irish government." Well, all I can say is this, that we who are now the government are exceedingly daring; but our daring is nothing like

yours. The man who will undertake to reconstruct the Irish government without touching the legislative principle from which administrative government derives its life, if he is not "a traitor or a fool"—these are words not ours, but are reserved for gentlemen quite different from us—he is either a magician or a man not much accustomed to the practical transaction of public affairs.

That is not all, sir. My noble friend did not stop by promising, in the exuberance of his zeal, that which I am convinced is absolutely impossible—namely, to reconstruct the Irish government for any practical purpose without providing a new spring of action, which can only be provided on the principle of the policy we propose. But my noble friend did not promise absolutely the principle of the policy we proposè, because he said that nothing could be done in the direction of giving Ireland anything like complete control over her own affairs, either in a day or a session or perhaps a parliament. But he pointed to the means by which it was to be done—namely, by the work of time, by the growth of small beginnings the superstructure was to be raised on a wise and sound foundation. Yes, but what is the principle really at issue between us? It is this, not whether we are right in proposing at one step to give to Ireland complete control of her own affairs, but whether it is a thing right to be done at all. At Belfast in November my noble friend in this passage implied that it might be a thing right to be done. To-night he is to move that it is a thing wrong to be done. What, then, is his policy? I am sorry to think that since November the movement of my noble friend has not been forward, but rather, as it appears to me, backward. We have heard nothing since November of this complete reconstruction of the Irish gov-

ernment, and the gradual progress on a sound foundation of a well-built structure. But I rejoice in that declaration on one ground—namely, that it implies that the complete control by Ireland of her own affairs is a thing which may be contemplated, and that, in the view of my noble friend, it is a thing compatible with the unity of the empire. Therefore I am convinced that it is not a thing to be renounced *ab initio*—to be renounced and proscribed as a something tending to disintegrate and break up the unity of the empire.

I confess that I do not believe in this gradual superstructure. I believe the meaning of it would be, if practicable, that a series of boons would be offered to Ireland, every one of which would, with an enormous loss of parliamentary time and temper, and with an immense obstruction of public business, be either entirely repudiated by Ireland, or be received in a grudging temper and with the fullest notification that whatever power of that kind you gave her would be used simply as an instrument for acquiring more power. I am very disinterested upon that subject. I should have disappeared from the scene while my noble friend's process was in a very early stage indeed. But I own I do not believe that that is the wisest method of dealing with the great Irish question. I believe we have reached one of those crises in the history of nations where the path of boldness is the path, and the only path, of safety. At least we have come to a time when there is one thing we ought to know, and that is our own minds. We ought to know and we ought to tell our minds. There is another thing which I hold to be essential—we ought not to take this great Irish question, and cast the fate of Ireland into the lottery of politics. I think it is obvious that I am

not open to the reproach of casting the fate of Ireland into the lottery of politics, because what you tell me is that I am steering Ireland to utter destruction and certain ruin. If we are proposing to drive Ireland down the cataract, point out to us the way of escape. Is it really to be supposed that the last declaration of my noble friend, which was the keeping alive of two or three clauses of the Crimes Act, which we intended to have kept in existence had we remained in office last year—is that really the policy for Ireland? To that no assent, no approval has been given from the important party opposite.

Sir, Parliament is entitled to know at this time of day the alternatives that are open to its choice. You say that we offer the alternative of ruin. At any rate, in our view it is of a very different character. But even in your view, it is a definite proposal, which is our justification on its behalf, and is the only contribution which we can make to the solution of the question. Parliament is entitled to have before it the alternatives proposed—the alternatives of policy, not of plan, proposed by those who are taking steps which may in certain contingencies with high probability bring into their hands the supreme direction of affairs. The Tory party have announced their policy. Repression—the 26th of January. That is a policy I understand. Here I know with whom, and with what, I have to deal. But as regards my noble friend, I must say that I am totally ignorant with whom, and with what, I am dealing, so far as policy is concerned. I hope that the notice he has given for to-night has been given with the intention of tracing out for us a palpable and visible road into the darkness, and that he will tell us on what principle it is that he proposes to make provision for the government

of Ireland. Let us know these alternatives. The more they are examined the better I believe it will be for us all. It will become reasonably clear—I won't say to demonstration—that we have before us a great opportunity of putting an end to the controversy of 700 years—ay, and of knitting together, by bonds firmer and higher in their character than those which heretofore we have mainly used, the hearts and affections of this people and the noble fabric of the British Empire.

HOME RULE

HOUSE OF COMMONS, JUNE 7, 1886

MR. SPEAKER—I shall venture to make, sir, a few remarks on the speech of the right honorable gentleman,¹ but I will first allow myself the satisfaction of expressing what I believe to be a very widespread sentiment, and saying with what pleasure I listened to two speeches this evening—the singularly eloquent speech of the senior member for Newcastle and the masterly exposition—for I cannot call it less—of the honorable member for Cork. Sir, I feel a strong conviction that speeches couched in that tone, marked alike by sound statesmanship and farseeing moderation, will never fail to produce a lasting effect upon the minds and convictions of the people of England and Scotland. Sir, with respect to the personal question which has arisen between the honorable member for Cork and the right honorable gentleman opposite, I think it no part of my duty to interfere. I have avoided, and I shall avoid, in the discussion of this

¹ Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, in the course of whose speech Mr. Parnell had referred to his communication with Lord Carnarvon.

question, so far as I can, all matters which are of a purely polemical character between party and party. I presume that this subject will be carried further. I understand a distinct allegation to be made by the honorable member for Cork with regard to some person, whose name he does not give, but who is one of a limited body. In that limited body it will not be difficult, I conclude, to procure it if it can be given. Upon that I pass no judgment. I simply make this comment upon a subject which is of considerable public interest. The right honorable gentleman opposite will do me the justice to say that I have not sought, before taking office or since taking it, to make the conduct which right honorable gentlemen opposite pursued on their accession to power, matter of reproach against them. If they do not like to do me that justice I shall not ask it.

On the speech of the right honorable gentleman I need not dwell at great length. He began by stating a series of what he succinctly described as simple facts. I will not say his simple facts are pure fictions, because that would hardly, perhaps, be courteous. But they are as devoid of foundation as if they had been pure fiction. The right honorable gentleman declared—though I do not see that it has much to do with the matter—that this is the bill of one man. Well, I am amazed that the right honorable gentleman speaks as if he had been at my elbow all day and every day through the autumn and winter of last year. How can any man know that this is the bill of one man? (A laugh.) How can the honorable member who laughs know that this is the bill of one man? Reference is made to the allegations of my right honorable friend the member for West Birmingham. My right honorable friend could only speak within the compass of his knowledge, and if

he said that it was the bill of one man he would know no more about it than the honorable member opposite. What my right honorable friend said, and said truly, was to state the time at which the bill came before the Cabinet. But, sir, long before that time the subject of the bill and its leading details had been matter of anxious consideration between me and my nearest political friends. (Cries of "Name!") I never heard a more extraordinary demand in my life, not to say gross impropriety. I refer to those of my colleagues who were most likely to give the most valuable aid, and with whom from the first I was in communication. Then, sir, the right honorable gentleman says we were installed in office by the help of the honorable member for Cork. The right honorable gentleman appears to have forgotten the elementary lessons of arithmetic. It is perfectly true that the energetic assistance of the honorable member for Cork might have kept the right honorable gentleman in office. The right honorable gentleman speaks of the party behind him and the Liberal party, as it then was on this side of the House, as if they had been two equal parties, and only required the honorable member for Cork and his friends to turn the scale. (Lord Randolph Churchill: "They were.") They were, says the noble lord! The noble lord's arithmetic is still more defective—385 is by 85 votes a larger party than 250. Then the right honorable gentleman says that, with the exception of the customs and excise duties, no change was made in the bill after it was first submitted to the Cabinet. He has no means of knowing that, even if it were true, but it happens to be entirely untrue. Provisions of great importance had never been seen by my right honorable friend the member for West Birmingham. My right honorable friend took ex-

ception to certain provisions of the bill without being acquainted with the whole *corpus* of the bill. That is the fact; so that the right honorable gentleman is entirely wrong also upon this as well as upon his other "simple facts." Then the right honorable gentleman says that I had announced that this bill was not to be reconstructed. I announced that I did not promise that it should be reconstructed. (A laugh.) There are actually gentlemen opposite—members of Parliament chosen to represent the country—who think this a matter of laughter, and can see no distinction between promises that a bill shall not be reconstructed, and not having promised that it shall be. I conceive that a person who has promised that a bill shall be reconstructed is bound to reconstruct it. Is that true? A person who has not promised that a bill shall be reconstructed is free to reconstruct it, but is not bound to do so. I hope I have made a clear distinction; and I am glad to see that the laughter opposite has ceased as light has flowed in upon the minds of those honorable gentlemen. I was struck with another observation of the right honorable gentleman. He says that this bill, whatever else may happen, will at any rate be rejected by the votes of a majority of English and Scotch members—(Opposition cheers)—and he is cheered by those who teach us that they are, above all things, anxious for the maintenance of an absolutely united kingdom, and an absolutely united parliament, in which Irish members are in all respects to be assimilated to, and identical with, those representing English and Scotch constituencies. The right honorable gentleman talks about a dissolution, and I am glad to find that upon that point he and we are much more nearly associated in our views and expectations than upon almost any other

point. After what the right honorable gentleman has said, and the want of acquaintance which he has shown with the history of this bill, on which he dwelt so long, and after what was said by my right honorable friend behind me [Mr. Goschen], I must again remind the House, at any rate, in the clearest terms I can use, of the exact position in which we stand with reference to the bill. In the first place, I take it to be absolutely beyond dispute, on broad and high parliamentary grounds, that that which is voted upon to-night is the principle of the bill as distinguished from the particulars of the bill. What may be the principle of the bill, I grant you freely I have no authority to determine. (A laugh.) The honorable member laughs; I am much obliged for his running commentary, which is not usual, on my observations, but it is our duty to give our own sense of the construction of the principle of the bill, and I think I drew a confirmation of that construction from the speech of the right honorable gentleman, because he himself said this was a bill for the purpose of establishing a legislative body in Ireland for the management of Irish affairs. Well, sir, that—if we have any power or any title to give our view on the subject—is the principle of the bill. As respects the principle of the bill, I apprehend it to be beyond all question that members voting for the principle of the bill are in this sense entirely and absolutely free—that if they consider that there is another set of provisions by means of which better and fuller effect may be given to the principle of the bill, they are at liberty to displace all the particulars they find in it which hinder that better and fuller effect being given to the principle. (A laugh.) That does not admit of doubt. I am quite certain the honorable member who laughs will not rise in

his place at any time and say that a member is not at liberty to remove each and all, if he thinks fit, of the particulars of the bill, if in good faith he believes that the principle of the bill can be better and more adequately promoted by a different set of provisions. But the government have taken certain engagements. They have taken an engagement as to taxation for the intervention of Irish members, to the terms of which I need not refer. They have also taken an engagement on the claim of Ireland to a continued concern through her members in the treatment of imperial subjects generally. And that has entailed a positive pledge to reconstruct the 24th clause, and to adopt certain consequential amendments connected with it. One more question has been raised, and has excited a deep interest—and that is with respect to other amendments to the bill. Of course as to the freedom of honorable members to suggest other amendments, I have spoken in terms which, I think, are abundantly large. As respects our duty, there can be no question at all that our duty, if an interval is granted to us, and the circumstances of the present session require the withdrawal of the bill, and it is to be re-introduced with amendments at an early date in the autumn—of course it is our duty to amend our bill with every real amendment and improvement, and with whatever is calculated to make it more effective and more acceptable for the attainment of its end. It is, as a matter of course, and without any specific assurance, our duty to consider all such amendments. We are perfectly free to deal with them; but it would be the meanest and basest act on the part of the government to pretend that they have a plan of reconstruction ready beforehand, cut and dry in their minds, at a time when, from the very nature of the case, it

must be obvious that they can have no such thing. So much then for the situation, for the freedom of members to propose amendments, for the duty of the government to consider amendments and improve their bill, if they can, with the view of a fuller and better application of the principle; but subject, let me add, to conditions—five in number—which have been clearly enumerated on a former occasion, and from which there is no intention on our part to recede. The right honorable gentleman speaks of Ulster as a question of principle. The question of Ulster, or whatever the common name of the question may be, may be one of great importance; but I must say that while I in no respect recede from the statement made in regard to it at the opening of these debates, yet I cannot see that any certain plan for Ulster has made any serious or effective progress.

The honorable and gallant gentleman, the member for North Armagh, emphatically disclaims the severance of Ulster from the rest of Ireland, and the honorable member for Cork has laid before us a reasoned and elaborate argument on that subject to-day, which, as it appears to me, requires the careful attention of those who propose such a plan for our acceptance. We retain, however, perfect freedom to judge the case upon its merits. Now, sir, I want to say a word upon the subject of Irish loyalism, because we are obliged to use phrases in debates of this kind which cannot be explained from time to time when using them, and it is well that there should be a little understanding beforehand. When I hear the speeches of the honorable member for South Belfast and of some other gentlemen it always appears to me that he is under the pious conviction that loyalty is innate in the Irish Protestants, and disloyalty

innate in—some other persons. I do believe that he is under the impression that at all times, in all the long generations of Irish history, that has been the distinction to be drawn between Protestants and persons who are not Protestants. Is Protestant loyalism a thing that has a date and origin, or is it not? Has the honorable member, or the honorable and gallant member for North Armagh, inquired what was the state of Ireland in the eighteenth century with respect to loyalty? As far as regarded the great mass of the population—the Roman Catholic population—they were hardly born into political life until the close of the century; and for a long period, in the time of Dean Swift, who describes their incapacity for political action as something beyond belief, it would have been absurd to speak of them as loyal or disloyal. But at the close of the century the Protestants and Roman Catholics of Ireland were described in a short passage by Mr. Burke, which I shall now read to the House. The date of it is 1797, and it is taken from a letter to Mr. Windham. He speaks of the subject of disaffection. "It"—that is to say disaffection—"has cast deep roots in the principles and habits of the majority among the lower and middle classes of the whole Protestant part of Ireland. The Catholics who are intermingled with them are more or less tainted. In the other parts of Ireland (some in Dublin only excepted) the Catholics, who are in a manner the whole people, are as yet sound; but they may be provoked, as all men easily may be, out of their principles."

What does that show? That the Protestants, not having grievances to complain of, have become loyal; but in many cases the Roman Catholics have been provoked, as Mr. Burke says all men easily may be, out of their prin-

ciples of loyalty. And these are words, and these are ideas, which show us what is the way in which to promote loyalty, and what is the way in which we can destroy it.

Another subject on which I shall dwell only for a moment is that of federation. Many gentlemen in this House are greatly enamored of this idea, and the object they have in view is a noble object. I will not admit the justice of the disparagement cast by the right honorable gentlemen on the British empire. I do not consider that this is a "loosely connected empire." But I admit that, if means can be devised of establishing a more active connection with our distant colonies, the idea is well worthy the attention of every loyal man. The idea of federation is a popular one. I will give no opinion upon it now; but I suspect that it is beset with more difficulties than have as yet been examined or brought to light. But this bill, whatever be its rights or wrongs in any other respect, is unquestionably a step—an important step—in that direction. Federation rests essentially upon two things, and upon two things alone, as preconditioned. One is the division of legislature, and the other is the division of subjects, and both those divisions are among the vital objects of this bill. The right honorable gentleman has referred to the question of supremacy. My own opinion is that this debate has, in a considerable degree, cleared the ground upon that subject. It is most satisfactory to me to hear the statements of the honorable member for Cork. I own I have heard some astounding doctrines—astounding to an ignorant layman—from learned lawyers; but still, upon the whole, the balance of authority seems to me to have established, as a clear and elementary proposition that cannot be denied that this Parliament, be it the imperial Par-

liament or not, as long as it continues in its legal identity, is possessed now, as it was possessed before the Union and before the time of Grattan's Parliament, of a supremacy which is absolutely, and in the nature of things inalienable, which it could not part with if it would, and which it would not part with if it could. There is no doubt a practical question, because it is quite true that in constituting a legislature in Ireland we do what we did when we constituted a legislature for Canada and for Australia. We devolve an important portion of power—we did it in Canada, and I hope we shall do it in Ireland—and we devolve it with a view to not a partial, not a nominal, but a real and practical independent management of their own affairs. That is what the right honorable gentleman objects to doing. That is the thing which we desire and hope and mean to do. It is obvious that the question may be raised, How are you to deal with the possible cases where the imperial government, notwithstanding this general division of affairs, may be compelled by obligations of imperial interest and honor to interfere? My answer is that this question has received a far better solution from practical politics, and from the experience of the last forty or fifty years, than could ever have been given to it by the definition of lawyers, however eminent they may be. When the legislature of Canada was founded this difficulty arose. We had the case of the Canadian Rebellion, where I myself, for one, was of opinion, and Lord Brougham was also of opinion—I know not now whether rightly or wrongly—that the honor of the crown had been invaded by the proposition to grant compensation for losses in the rebellion to those who had been rebels, and who had incurred those losses as rebels. I say nothing now about

our being right or wrong; but in 1849 Lord Brougham brought forward a motion on the subject in the House of Lords, and I myself did the same in the House of Commons. The important part was the declaration which was drawn from Ministers of the crown. Lord John Russell then, in answer to me, laid down what I conceive to be a true and sound doctrine, in terms which, I think, may be described as classical and authoritative in their manner of dealing with this question. Lord Russell, speaking on the 14th of June, 1849, said—"I entirely concur with the right honorable gentleman—and it is, indeed, in conformity with the sentiments I expressed in a despatch written, I think, some ten years ago—that there are cases which must be left to the decision of the responsible Ministers of the crown. There are cases where the honor of the crown and the safety of this country are concerned, and in such cases it requires the utmost temper in the colonies, and the utmost temper and firmness in this country, in order to prevent differences from being pushed to a collision which might be fatal to the connections between the mother country and the colonies. I fully admit that there are such cases; but when the right honorable gentleman goes on to say that he considers the Earl of Elgin has received some instructions from the government of this country by which he is debarred from asking the advice and direction of the crown upon questions which affect imperial policy and the national honor, he is totally mistaken in that unwarranted assumption."

That passage, as I believe, contains, very justly and clearly set forth, the practical mode by which this question, difficult in the abstract, will be settled now as it has been settled before; and we shall find that as it has been

perfectly easy to reconcile the rights of Canada with the supremacy of the imperial Parliament, it will not be less easy in practice to reconcile the rights and the autonomy of Ireland with the same supremacy.

I wish now to refer to another matter. I hear constantly used the terms Unionists and Separatists. But what I want to know is, Who are the Unionists? I want to know who are the Separatists? I see this bill described in newspapers of great circulation and elsewhere, as a Separation Bill. Several gentlemen opposite adopt and make that style of description their own. Speaking of that description, I say that it is the merest slang of vulgar controversy. Do you think this bill will tend to separation? Well, your arguments, and even your prejudices, are worthy of all consideration and respect; but is it a fair and rational mode of conducting a controversy to attach these hard names to measures on which you wish to argue, and on which I suppose you desire to convince by argument? Let me illustrate. I go back to the Reform Act of Lord Grey. When that Reform Bill was introduced, it was conscientiously and honestly believed by great masses of men, and intelligent men, too, that the bill absolutely involved the destruction of the monarchy. The Duke of Wellington propounded a doctrine very much to this effect; but I do not think that any of those gentlemen, nor the newspapers that supported them, ever descended so low in their choice of weapons as to call the measure "The Monarchy Destruction Bill." Such language is a mere begging of the question. Now, I must make a large demand on your patience and your indulgence—we conscientiously believe that there are Unionists and Disunionists; but that it is our policy that leads to

union and yours to separation. This involves a very large and deep historical question. Let us try for a few moments to look at it historically. The arguments used on the other side of the House appear to me to rest in principle and in the main upon one of two suppositions. One of them, which I will not now discuss, is the profound incompetency of the Irish people; but there is another, and it is this. It is, I believe, the conscientious conviction of the honorable gentlemen opposite, that when two or more countries, associated, but not incorporated together, are in disturbed relations with each other, the remedy is to create an absolute legislative incorporation. On the other hand, they believe that the dissolution of such an incorporation is clearly the mode to bring about the dissolution of the political relations of those countries. I do not deny that there may be cases in which legislative incorporation may have been the means of constituting a great country, as in the case of France. But we believe, as proved by history, that where there are those disturbed relations between countries associated, but not incorporated, the true principle is to make ample provision for local independence, subject to imperial unity. These are propositions of the greatest interest and importance. Gentlemen speak of tightening the ties between England and Ireland as if tightening the ties were always the means to be adopted. Tightening the tie is frequently the means of making it burst, while relaxing the tie is very frequently the way to provide for its durability, and enable it to stand a stronger strain; so that it is true, as was said by the honorable member for Newcastle, that the separation of legislatures is often the union of countries, and the union of legislatures is often the severance of countries.

Can you give me a single instance from all your historical inquiries where the acknowledgment of local independence has been followed by the severance of countries? [Cries of "Turkey!" "Servia!"] I was just going to refer to those countries, and to make the admission—that what I have said does not apply where a third power has intervened, and has given liberty, in defiance of the sovereign power, to the subject state. But do you propose to wait until some third power shall intervene in the case of Ireland, as it intervened in the case of America? [An honorable member: "We are not afraid."] I never asked the honorable gentleman whether he was afraid. It does not matter much whether he is afraid or not; but I would inculcate in him that early and provident fear which, in the language of Mr. Burke, is the mother of safety. I admit that where some third power interferes, as France interfered in the case of America, you can expect nothing to result but severance, with hostile feeling on both sides. But I am not speaking of such cases. That is not the case before us. But I ask you to give me a single instance where, apart from the intervention of a third power, the independence of the legislatures was followed by the severance of the nations. I can give several instances where total severance of countries has been the consequence of an attempt to tighten the bond—in the case of England and America, in the case of Belgium and Holland. The attempt to make Belgians conform to the ways and ideas and institutions of Holland led to the severance of the two countries. In the case of Denmark and the Duchies, they long attempted to do what, perhaps, gentlemen would wish much to do in Ireland—namely, to force Danish institutions and ideas on the Duchies.

Those long attempts ended, as we all know, together with the insufficient acknowledgment of the ancient institutions of those Duchies, in the total loss of those Duchies to Denmark, and their incorporation in another political connection. But let us not look simply to the negative side. Where local independence has been acknowledged and legislative severance has been given, there, in a number of cases, it has been made practicable to hold countries together that otherwise could not have been held together, and the difficulties which existed either have been lessened or altogether removed. The world is full of such cases. (An honorable member: "Turkey.") An honorable gentleman imprudently interrupted me by calling out "Turkey." I am going to tell him that in Turkey, with its imperfect organization, in cases where there has not been violent interference, where the matter has not been driven to a point to provoke armed interference by a foreign power, local autonomy has been tried, and tried with the best effect. In the island of Crete, which twenty years ago appeared to be almost lost to Turkey, loosening the ties to Constantinople has immensely improved the relations between the Sultan and that island. (Lord Randolph Churchill—"Chronic revolution.") Chronic revolution! What are the tests of chronic revolution? Has it paid its tribute? Has it called for the armed force of Turkey to put down revolt? Then I will take another case, the case of the Lebanon. That was the subject of international arrangement twenty-three or twenty-four years ago. The Lebanon was in chronic revolution, and was under the absolute sway of Constantinople. The Lebanon was placed under a system of practical local independence, and from that day to this it has never been a trouble

to Turkey. In a case more remarkable, the case of the island of Samos, which has enjoyed for a length of time, I believe, a complete autonomy, and in which, singular as it may seem, it has never been possible to create disorder, a real attachment to the Turkish empire, or, at any rate, a contentment with the political tie, subsists and holds that country in tranquillity, so that even Turkey bears testimony to the principle of which I speak. There are numbers of other cases. The case of Norway and Sweden is most remarkable, because of these two countries the stronger and more populous can hardly hope to have power to coerce the weaker—two countries completely separate, having absolutely no connection of legislative or executive government, and united together recently—only sixty years ago. That union has been found practicable, and practicable only, by means of granting a just autonomy and independence. Take the case of Denmark and Iceland. (Laughter.) Laughter is, with honorable gentlemen opposite, a very common weapon now, and it is very difficult for me to contend with it at this period of my life. Perhaps twenty, thirty, or forty years ago I could have defended myself against it with more ease. It has been said that the Parliament of Iceland has been dissolved, and that there have been difficulties. Well, there have been difficulties between the Parliament of Iceland and the crown of Denmark. The crown of Denmark is, unhappily, in difficulties with the legislative body of Denmark, but between the legislative body of Denmark and the legislative body of Iceland there have been, I believe, no difficulties. When my honorable friend, the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs [Mr. Bryce], in his admirable speech, quoted the case of Iceland, honorable

gentlemen opposite; with their usual method of rebuke, laughed; and some one, endeavoring to dignify, adorn, and decorate that laughter with an idea, called out, "Distance; Iceland is so distant." Well, if it is so distant, I apprehend that that makes it a great deal more difficult for Denmark to hold her down by force, and therefore more necessary for her to choose the methods which are most likely to secure contentment and tranquillity. But if you object to the case of Iceland on account of distance, what do you say to the case of Finland? Is that country distant from Russia? Are you aware that the social and political difficulties, which have so often threatened the peace of Russia, and which were fatal not many years ago to the life of one of the best and worthiest of her sovereigns, have no place in Finland? Why? Because Finland has perfect legislative autonomy, the management of her own affairs, the preservation of her own institutions. That state of things has given contentment to Finland, and might be envied by many better known and more famous parts of the world. But the case of Austria is, perhaps, the most remarkable of all. I will not refer now to Austria and Hungary further than to say that I believe my right honorable friend, the member for East Edinburgh [Mr. Goschen], is entirely wrong, for all practical purposes, in what he said as to the mixture of executive governments as far as local affairs are concerned. As far as joint affairs are concerned, it is a different matter; but there is a perfect independence between Austria and Hungary so far as local affairs are concerned. The case there, I should state, was surrounded with difficulties infinitely transcending any before us. But it is not Austria and Hungary alone. It is not too much to say of Austria that that great empire, with the multitude of

states of which it is composed, is held together by local autonomy and nothing else, and that the man who should attempt to banish local autonomy from Austria, and to gather together the representatives of her states in Vienna to deal with the local affairs of the provinces, would seal the death-warrant of the empire. Long may she flourish, as having based herself upon so just and so enlightened a principle. The most striking instance in the wide circuit of her empire is Galicia. Galicia is inhabited by Poles. Austria has one of the fragments of that unhappy and dissevered country under her charge. Well, I need not speak of Russia and Poland, while even in Prussia the relations of Prussian Poland are, at this moment, the subject of the most serious difficulty. There are no difficulties between Galicia and Austria. Why? Because Austria has treated Galicia upon the principle of placing trust and confidence in her, and has invested her with full practical power over the management of her own affairs. Now, I do not think that I have thrown out any unfair challenges. I have asked for instances from the other side, in which the granting of Home Rule has been attended with evil consequences, but none has been given—whereas I have given a multitude of instances in support of my proposition, which is that the severance which we propose to make for local purposes between the Irish legislative body and Parliament meeting in these walls, is not a mode of disunion, but is a mode of closer union, and is not a mode of separation, but is a mode preventing separation.

Before I leave this point, I must refer to the case of Canada, because it is so remarkable, and because, notwithstanding the multitude of circumstantial differences between Canada and Great Britain, yet still the resemblances in prin-

ciple are so profound and so significant. My right honorable friend, the member for West Birmingham, said, as I understood him the other day, that he had been investigating the case of Canada. I own I thought I knew something about it, because in the early years of my parliamentary life I took great interest in it, and some part in the great discussions on the disposal of Canada some fifty years ago. My reading of the history of Canada sustains my original propositions. My right honorable friend announced to the House that he had found that the legislative councils in Canada had been established for the purpose of protecting the minority. Where did he find that? I read not long ago the very lengthened and detailed debates in Parliament on the subject of the establishment of those legislative councils, and from the beginning to the end of those debates, while the character of the legislative councils was abundantly discussed, there is not a word about their being appointed for the protection of minorities. But I will not rest the case of Canada upon that ground. What does the case of Canada show? It shows two things—first, that between 1830 and 1840 there were most formidable differences between Great Britain and Canada, and that those differences were completely cured and healed by the establishment of a responsible government with a free executive—that is to say, that those differences were absolutely cured by the very remedy which we now propose to apply in the case of Ireland. But, as I have shown, supremacy was not relinquished, it remained as was stated in the citation from Lord Russell. But after that, what happened? The two provinces changed most fundamentally in their relative importance, and the stereotyped arrangements of the union of 1840 were found to be totally inadequate to deal with the altered conditions.

of the provinces among themselves. Recollect that these provinces were united provinces, with one legislature. Discord arose between them. What was the mode adopted of curing that discord? The mode which we now propose of the severance of the legislatures—the establishment of an extended union under which, at this moment, with the multiplied legislatures of those provinces, a substantial and perfect political harmony exists. I can understand, then, the disinclination which honorable gentlemen opposite have to go into history as to these cases, but it will be unfolded more and more as these debates proceed, if the controversy be prolonged—it will more and more appear how strong is the foundation upon which we stand now, and upon which Mr. Grattan stood over eighty-six years ago, when he contended that a union of the legislatures was the way to a moral and a real separation between the two countries.

It has been asked in this debate, Why have we put aside all the other business of Parliament, and why have we thrown the country into all this agitation for the sake of the Irish question? ("Hear, hear!") That cheer is the echo that I wanted. Well, sir, the first reason is this—because in Ireland the primary purposes of government are not attained. What said the honorable member for Newcastle in his eloquent speech? That in a considerable part of Ireland distress was chronic, disaffection was perpetual, and insurrection was smouldering. What is implied by those who speak of the dreadful murder that lately took place in Kerry? And I must quote the Belfast outrage along with it—not as being precisely of the same character, out as a significant proof of the weakness of the tie which binds the people to the law. Sir, it is that you have not

got that respect for the law, that sympathy with the law on the part of the people, without which real civilization cannot exist. That is our first reason. I will not go back at this time on the dreadful story of the Union; but that, too, must be unfolded in all its hideous features if this controversy is to be prolonged—that Union of which I ought to say that, without qualifying in the least any epithet I have used, I do not believe that that Union can or ought to be repealed, for it has made marks upon history that cannot be effaced. But I go on to another pious belief which prevails on the other side of the House, or which is often professed in controversies on the Irish question. It is supposed that all the abuses of English power in Ireland relate to a remote period of history, and that from the year 1800 onward, from the time of the Union, there has been a period of steady redress of grievances. Sir, I am sorry to say there has been nothing of the kind. There has been a period when grievances have been redressed under compulsion, as in 1829, when Catholic emancipation was granted to avoid civil war. There have been grievances, mixed up with the most terrible evidence of the general failure of government, as was exhibited by the Devon Commission in the year 1843. On a former night I made a quotation from the report which spoke of the laborer. Now I have a corresponding quotation, which is more important, and which speaks of the cottier. What was the proportion of the population which, more than forty years after the Union, was described by the Devon report as being in a condition worse and more disgraceful than any population in Europe? Mr. O'Connell has estimated it in this House at 5,000,000 out of 7,000,000; and Sir James Graham, in debate with him, declined to admit that it was

5,000,000, but did admit that it was 3,500,000. Well, sir, in 1816 Parliament passed an act of Irish legislation. What was the purpose of that act? The act declared that, from the state of the law in Ireland, the old intertangled usages, which had replaced in an imperfect manner tribal usages on which the tenure of land in Ireland was founded—Parliament swept them away, and did everything to expose the tenant to the action of the landlord, but nothing to relieve or to deal with, by any amendment of the law, the terrible distress which was finally disclosed by the Devon Commission. Again, what was the state of Ireland with regard to freedom? In the year 1820 the sheriff of Dublin and the other gentry of that county and capital determined to have a county meeting to make compliments to George IV.—the trial of Queen Caroline being just over. They held their county meeting, the people went to the county meeting, and a counter address was moved, warm in professions of loyalty, but setting out the grievances of the country, and condemning the trial and proceedings against the queen. The sheriff refused to hear it. He put his own motion, but refused to put the other motion; he left the meeting, which continued the debate, and he sent in the military to the meeting, which was broken up by force. That was the state of Ireland as to freedom of petition and remonstrance twenty years after the Union. Do you suppose that would have been the case if Ireland had retained her own Parliament? No, sir.

Other cases I will not dwell upon at this late hour, simply on account of the lateness of the hour. From 1849, when we passed an act which enabled the landlords of Ireland to sell improvements on their tenants' holdings over their heads, down to 1880, when a most limited and care-

fully framed bill, the product of Mr. Forster's benevolence, was passed by this House, and rejected by an enormous majority in the House of Lords, thereby precipitating the Land Act of 1881, it is impossible to stand by the legislation of this House as a whole since the Union. I have sometimes heard it said, You have had all kinds of remedial Legislation. The two chief items are the Disestablishment of the Church and the reform of the Land laws. But what did you say of these? Why, you said the change in the land laws was confiscation, and the disestablishment of the Church was sacrilege. You cannot at one and the same time condemn these measures as confiscation and sacrilege, and at the same time quote them as proofs of the justice with which you have acted to Ireland. I must further say that we have proposed this measure because Ireland wants to make her own laws. It is not enough to say that you are prepared to make good laws. You were prepared to make good laws for the colonies. You did make good laws for the colonies, according to the best of your light. The colonists were totally dissatisfied with them. You accepted their claim to make their own laws. Ireland, in our opinion, has a claim not less urgent.

Now, sir, what is before us? What is before us in the event of the rejection of this bill? What alternatives have been proposed? There I must for a moment comment on the fertile imagination of my right honorable friend, the member for West Birmingham. He has proposed alternatives, and plenty of them. My right honorable friend says that a dissolution has no terrors for him. I do not wonder at it. I do not see how a dissolution can have any terrors for him. He has trimmed his vessel and he has touched his rudder in such a masterly way, that in whichever direction

the winds of heaven may blow they must fill his sails. Let me illustrate my meaning. I will suppose different cases. Supposing at the election—I mean that an election is a thing like Christmas, it is always coming—suppose that at an election public opinion should be very strong in favor of the bill. My right honorable friend would then be perfectly prepared to meet that public opinion, and tell it—"I declared strongly that I adopted the principle of the bill." On the other hand, if public opinion was very adverse to the bill, my right honorable friend again is in complete armor, because he says—"Yes, I voted against the bill." Supposing, again, public opinion is in favor of a very large plan for Ireland, my right honorable friend is perfectly provided for that case also. The government plan was not large enough for him, and he proposed in his speech on the introduction of the bill that we should have a measure on the basis of federation, which goes beyond this bill. Lastly—and now I have very nearly boxed the compass—supposing that public opinion should take quite a different turn, and, instead of wanting very large measures for Ireland, should demand very small measures for Ireland, still the resources of my honorable friend are not exhausted, because then he is able to point out that the last of his plans was four provincial councils controlled from London. Under other circumstances I should perhaps have been tempted to ask the secret of my right honorable friend's recipe; as it is, I am afraid I am too old to learn it. But I do not wonder that a dissolution has no terrors for him, because he is prepared in such a way and with such a series of expedients to meet all the possible contingencies of the case.

Well, sir, when I come to look at these practical alterna-

tives and provisions, I find that they are visibly creations of the vivid imagination, born of the hour, and perishing with the hour, totally and absolutely unavailable for the solution of a great and difficult problem, the weight of which and the urgency of which my right honorable friend himself in other days has seemed to feel. But I should not say now that our plan has possession of the field without a rival. Lord Salisbury has given us a rival plan. My first remark is that Lord Salisbury's policy has not been disavowed. It is therefore adopted. What is it? (A laugh.) Another laugh? It has not been disavowed; what is it? Great complaints are made because it has been called a policy of coercion, and Lord Salisbury is stated to have explained in "another place" that he is not favorable to coercion, but only to legislative provisions for preventing interference by one man with the liberty of another, and for insuring the regular execution of the law. And that, you say, is not coercion? Was that your view six months ago? What did the Liberal Government propose when they went out of office? They proposed to enact clauses against the — (Cries of "No, No," from the Opposition.) (Lord Randolph Churchill—"They never made any proposal.") Perhaps not; but it was publicly stated. It was stated by me in a letter to the right honorable gentleman. (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach—"In October.") Certainly; but it was stated in order to correct a rather gross error of the right honorable gentleman. It was stated as what we had intended when we were going out of office; unless I am greatly mistaken, it was publicly stated in this House long before. However, it is not very important. What were the proposals that we were about to make, or that we were supposed to be about to make? Well, a proposal about

"Boycotting"—to prevent one man interfering with the liberty of another; and a proposal about a change of venue to insure the execution of the ordinary law. And how were these proposals viewed? Did not the Tories go to the elections putting upon their placards, "Vote for the Tories, and no Coercion"? (Sir Walter B. Barttelot—"No, no!") I do not say that every Tory did it. The honorable and gallant baronet cries "No." No doubt he did not do it: but he had no Irish voters. (Sir W. B. Barttelot—"If I had I would have done it.") Then it means this—that these proposals which we were about to make were defined as coercion by the Tories at the election, and Lord Salisbury now denies them to be coercion; and it is resented with the loudest manifestations of displeasure when any one on this side of the House states that Lord Salisbury has recommended twenty years of coercion. Lord Salisbury recommended, as he says himself, twenty years of those measures which last year were denounced by the Tories. But what did Lord Salisbury call them himself? What were his own words? His words were—"My alternative policy is that Parliament should enable the government of England to govern Ireland." What is the meaning of those words? Their meaning, in the first instance, is this: The government does not want the aid of Parliament to exercise their executive power; it wants the aid of Parliament for fresh legislation. The demand that the Parliament should enable the government of England to govern Ireland is a demand for fresh legislative power. This fresh legislative power, how are they to use? "Apply that recipe honestly, consistently, and resolutely for twenty years, and at the end of that time you will find Ireland will be fit to accept any gift in the way of local government or repeal of coercion laws

that you may wish to give." And yet objections and complaints of misrepresentations teem from that side of the House when any one on this side says that Lord Salisbury recommended coercion, when he himself applies that same term in his own words.

A question was put to me by my honorable friend the member for Bermondsey, in the course of his most instructive speech. My honorable friend had a serious misgiving as to the point of time. Were we right in introducing this measure now? He did not object to the principle; he intimated a doubt as to the moment. I may ask my honorable friend to consider what would have happened had we hesitated as to the duty before us, had we used the constant efforts that would have been necessary to keep the late government in office, and allowed them to persevere in their intentions. On the 26th of January they proposed what we termed a measure of coercion, and I think we were justified in so terming it, because anything attempting to put down a political association can hardly have another name. Can it be denied that that legislation must have been accompanied by legislation against the press, legislation against public meetings, and other legislation without which it would have been totally ineffective? Would it have been better, if a great controversy cannot be avoided—and I am sensible of the evil of this great controversy—I say it is better that parties should be matched in conflict upon a question of giving a great boon to Ireland, rather than—as we should have been if the policy of January 26 had proceeded—that we should have been matched and brought into conflict, and the whole country torn with dispute and discussion upon the policy of a great measure of coercion. That is my first reason. My second reason is

this. Let my honorable friend recollect that this is the earliest moment in our parliamentary history when we have the voice of Ireland authentically expressed in our hearing. Majorities of Home Rulers there may have been upon other occasions; a practical majority of Irish members never has been brought together for such a purpose. Now, first, we can understand her; we are able to learn authentically what she wants and wishes, what she offers and will do; and as we ourselves enter into the strongest moral and honorable obligations by the steps which we have taken in this House, so we have before us practically an Ireland under the representative system, able to give us equally authentic information, able morally to convey to us an assurance, the breach and rupture of which would cover Ireland with disgrace. There is another reason, but not a very important one. It is this—I feel that any attempt to palter with the demands of Ireland so conveyed in forms known to the Constitution, and any rejection of the conciliatory policy might have an effect that none of us could wish in strengthening that party of disorder which is behind the back of the Irish representatives, which skulks in America, which skulks in Ireland, which, I trust, is losing ground and is losing force, and will lose ground and will lose force in proportion as our policy is carried out, and which I cannot altogether dismiss from consideration when I take into view the consequences that might follow upon its rejection. What is the case of Ireland at this moment? Have honorable gentlemen considered that they are coming into conflict with a nation? Can anything stop a nation's demand, except its being proved to be immoderate and unsafe? But here are multitudes, and I believe millions upon millions, out of doors, who feel this demand to be

neither immoderate nor unsafe. In our opinion there is but one question before us about this demand. It is as to the time and circumstance of granting it. There is no question in our minds that it will be granted. We wish it to be granted in the mode prescribed by Mr. Burke. Mr. Burke said, in his first speech at Bristol—"I was true to my old-standing invariable principle, that all things which came from Great Britain should issue as a gift of her bounty and beneficence rather than as claims recovered against struggling litigants, or at least, if your beneficence obtained no credit in your concessions, yet that they should appear the salutary provisions of your wisdom and foresight—not as things wrung from you with your blood by the cruel grip of a rigid necessity."

The difference between giving with freedom and dignity on the one side, with acknowledgment and gratitude on the other, and giving under compulsion—giving with disgrace, giving with resentment dogging you at every step of your path—this difference is, in our eyes, fundamental, and this is the main reason, not only why we have acted, but why we have acted now. This, if I understand it, is one of the golden moments of our history—one of those opportunities which may come and may go, but which rarely return, or, if they return, return at long intervals, and under circumstances which no man can forecast. There have been such golden moments even in the tragic history of Ireland, as her poet says:

"One time the harp of Innisfail
Was tuned to notes of gladness."

And then he goes on to say:

"But yet did oftener tell a tale
Of more prevailing sadness."

But there was such a golden moment—it was in 1795—it was on the mission of Lord Fitzwilliam. At that moment it is historically clear that the Parliament of Grattan was on the point of solving the Irish problem. The two great knots of that problem were, in the first place, Roman Catholic emancipation; and, in the second place, the reform of Parliament. The cup was at her lips, and she was ready to drink it, when the hand of England rudely and ruthlessly dashed it to the ground, in obedience to the wild and dangerous intimations of an Irish faction—

“Ex illo sinere ac retro sublaqueis referri,
Spes Danaum.”—Verg. *Æn.* ii. 169.

There has been no great day of hope for Ireland, no day when you might hope completely and definitely to end the controversy till now—more than ninety years. The long periodic time has at last run out, and the star has again mounted into the heavens. What Ireland was doing for herself in 1795 we at length have done. The Roman Catholics have been emancipated—emancipated after a woful disregard of solemn promises through twenty-nine years, emancipated slowly, sullenly, not from goodwill, but from abject terror, with all the fruits and consequences which will always follow that method of legislation. The second problem has been also solved, and the representation of Ireland has been thoroughly reformed; and I am thankful to say that the franchise was given to Ireland on the readjustment of last year with a free heart, with an open hand, and the gift of that franchise was the last act required to make the success of Ireland in her final effort absolutely sure. We have given Ireland a voice; we must all listen for a moment to what she says. We must all

listen, both sides, both parties—I mean as they are divided on this question—divided, I am afraid, by an almost immeasurable gap. We do not undervalue or despise the forces opposed to us. I have described them as the forces of class and its dependants; and that as a general description—as a slight and rude outline of a description—is, I believe, perfectly true. I do not deny that many are against us whom we should have expected to be for us. I do not deny that some whom we see against us have caused us by their conscientious action the bitterest disappointment. You have power, you have wealth, you have rank, you have station, you have organization. What have we? We think that we have the people's heart; we believe and we know we have the promise of the harvest of the future. As to the people's heart, you may dispute it, and dispute it with perfect sincerity. Let that matter make its own proof. As to the harvest of the future, I doubt if you have so much confidence, and I believe that there is in the breast of many a man who means to vote against us to-night a profound misgiving, approaching even to a deep conviction, that the end will be as we foresee, and not as you do—that the ebbing tide is with you, and the flowing tide is with us.

Ireland stands at your bar, expectant, hopeful, almost suppliant. Her words are the words of truth and soberness. She asks a blessed oblivion of the past, and in that oblivion our interest is deeper than even hers. My right honorable friend, the member for East Edinburgh, asks us to-night to abide by the traditions of which we are the heirs. What traditions? By the Irish traditions? Go into the length and breadth of the world, ransack the literature of all countries, find, if you can, a single voice, a single book—find, I

would almost say, as much as a single newspaper article, unless the product of the day, in which the conduct of England toward Ireland is anywhere treated except with profound and bitter condemnation. Are these the traditions by which we are exhorted to stand? No; they are a sad exception to the glory of our country. They are a broad and black blot upon the pages of its history; and what we want to do is to stand by the traditions of which we are the heirs in all matters except our relations with Ireland, and to make our relations with Ireland to conform to the other traditions of our country. 'So we treat our traditions—so we hail the demand of Ireland for what I call a blessed oblivion of the past. She asks also a boon for the future; and that boon for the future, unless we are much mistaken, will be a boon to us in respect of honor, no less than a boon to her in respect of happiness, prosperity, and peace. Such, sir, is her prayer. Think, I beseech you, think well, think wisely, think, not for the moment, but for the years that are to come, before you reject this bill.

JOHN BRIGHT

JOHN BRIGHT, the son of a Quaker cotton-spinner, was born near Rochdale, in Lancashire, in 1811. Being a Dissenter, he was educated at a private school, and was debarred from entering any of the universities. From the moment that he entered Parliament in 1843, he coöperated vigorously with Richard Cobden in the furtherance of the movement for the repeal of the Corn Laws, which was to triumph after it had made a convert of Sir Robert Peel. His opposition to the Crimean War caused him, in 1857, to lose the seat which he had held for a Manchester constituency, but he was presently returned from Birmingham, and remained in Parliament for upward of thirty years. Throughout his parliamentary career he was an earnest advocate of justice to Ireland, of the equitable treatment of India, and of the cultivation of friendship between England and the United States. After holding office repeatedly under Liberal Prime Ministers, he parted company with Gladstone in 1886 on the question of Home Rule. He died in 1889. John Bright should probably be regarded as, upon the whole, the most graceful, finished and persuasive speaker among the public men of his day in his own country; it is certain that his speeches are read with more pleasure than are those of any other contemporary English orator.

THE "TRENT" AFFAIR¹

ROCHDALE, DECEMBER 4, 1861

WHEN the gentlemen who invited me to this dinner called upon me, I felt their kindness very sensibly, and now I am deeply grateful to my friends around me, and to you all, for the abundant manifestations of kindness with which I have been received to-night. I

¹ During the excitement caused by the seizure of Messrs. Mason and Slidell, the envoys of the Slaveholders' Confederation, on board the "Trent" steamer, Mr. Bright's townsmen invited him to a public banquet, that they might have the opportunity of hearing his opinions on the American Civil War, and on the duty of England in regard to it.

am, as you all know, surrounded at this moment by my neighbors and friends, and I may say with the utmost truth, that I value the good opinions of those who now hear my voice far beyond the opinions of any equal number of the inhabitants of this country selected from any other portion of it. You have, by this act of kindness that you have shown me, given proof that, in the main, you do not disapprove of my course and labors, that at least you are willing to express an opinion that the motives by which I have been actuated have been honest and honorable to myself, and that that course has not been entirely without service to my country. Coming to this meeting, or to any similar meeting, I always find that the subjects for discussion appear too many, and far more than it is possible to treat at length. In these times in which we live, by the influence of the telegraph, and the steamboat and the railroad, and the multiplication of newspapers, we seem continually to stand as on the top of an exceeding high mountain, from which we behold all the kingdoms of the earth and all the glory of them—unhappily, also, not only their glory, but their follies, and their crimes, and their calamities.

Seven years ago, our eyes were turned with anxious expectation to a remote corner of Europe, where five nations were contending in bloody strife for an object which possibly hardly one of them comprehended, and, if they did comprehend it, which all sensible men among them must have known to be absolutely impracticable. Four years ago, we were looking still further to the East, where there was a gigantic revolt in a great dependency of the British crown, arising mainly from gross neglect, and from the incapacity of England, up to that moment, to govern the country which it had known how to conquer. Two years

ago we looked south, to the plains of Lombardy, and saw a great strife there, in which every man in England took a strong interest; and we have welcomed, as the result of that strife, the addition of a great kingdom to the list of European States. Now our eyes are turned in a contrary direction, and we look to the west. There we see a struggle in progress of the very highest interest to England and to humanity at large. We see there a nation which I shall call the Transatlantic English nation—the inheritor and partaker of all the historic glories of this country. We see it torn with intestine broils, and suffering from calamities from which for more than a century past—in fact, for more than two centuries past—this country has been exempt. That struggle is of especial interest to us. We remember the description which one of our great poets gives of Rome—

"Lone mother of dead empires."

But England is the living mother of great nations on the American and on the Australian continents, which promise to endow the world with all her knowledge and all her civilization, and with even something more than the freedom she herself enjoys.

Eighty-five years ago, at the time when some of our oldest townsmen were very little children, there were, on the North American continent, colonies, mainly of Englishmen, containing about three millions of souls. These colonies we have seen a year ago constituting the United States of North America, and comprising a population of no less than thirty millions of souls. We know that in agriculture and manufactures, with the exception of this kingdom, there is no country in the world which in these arts may be placed in

advance of the United States. With regard to inventions, I believe, within the last thirty years, we have received more useful inventions from the United States than from all the other countries of the earth. In that country there are probably ten times as many miles of telegraph as there are in this country, and there are at least five or six times as many miles of railway. The tonnage of its shipping is at least equal to ours, if it does not exceed ours. The prisons of that country—for, even in countries the most favored, prisons are needful—have been models for other nations of the earth; and many European governments have sent missions at different times to inquire into the admirable system of education so universally adopted in their free schools throughout the Northern States.

If I were to speak of that country in a religious aspect, I should say that, considering the short space of time to which their history goes back, there is nothing on the face of the earth besides, and never has been, to equal the magnificent arrangement of churches and ministers, and of all the appliances which are thought necessary for a nation to teach Christianity and morality to its people. Besides all this, when I state that, for many years past, the annual public expenditure of the government of that country has been somewhere between £10,000,000 and £15,000,000, I need not perhaps say further that there has always existed among all the population an amount of comfort and prosperity and abounding plenty such as I believe no other country in the world, in any age, has enjoyed.

This is a very fine, but a very true picture; yet it has another side to which I must advert. There has been one great feature in that country, one great contrast, which has been pointed to by all who have commented upon the

United States as a feature of danger, as a contrast calculated to give pain. There has been in that country the utmost liberty to the white man, and bondage and degradation to the black man. Now rely upon it, that wherever Christianity lives and flourishes, there must grow up from it, necessarily, a conscience hostile to any oppression and to any wrong; and therefore, from the hour when the United States Constitution was formed, so long as it left there this great evil—then comparatively small, but now so great—it left there seeds of that which an American statesman has so happily described of that "irrepressible conflict" of which now the whole world is the witness. It has been a common thing for men disposed to carp at the United States to point to this blot upon their fair fame, and to compare it with the boasted declaration of freedom in their Deed and Declaration of Independence. But we must recollect who sowed this seed of trouble, and how and by whom it has been cherished.

Without dwelling upon this stain any longer, I should like to read to you a paragraph from the instructions understood to have been given to the Virginian delegates to Congress, in the month of August, 1774, by Mr. Jefferson, who was perhaps the ablest man the United States had produced up to that time, and who was then actively engaged in its affairs, and who afterward for two periods filled the office of President. He represented one of these very slave States—the State of Virginia—and he says:

"For the most trifling reasons, and sometimes for no conceivable reason at all, his Majesty has rejected laws of the most salutary tendency. The abolition of domestic slavery is the great object of desire in those colonies where it was unhappily introduced in their infant state.

But previous to the enfranchisement of the slaves we have, it is necessary to exclude all further importations from Africa. Yet our repeated attempts to effect this by prohibition, and by imposing duties which might amount to prohibition, have hitherto been defeated by his Majesty's negative—thus preferring the immediate advantages of a few British corsairs to the lasting interests of the American States, and to the rights of human nature, deeply wounded by this infamous practice."

I read this merely to show that, two years before the Declaration of Independence was signed, Mr. Jefferson, acting on behalf of those he represented in Virginia, wrote that protest against the course of the English Government which prevented the colonists from abolishing the slave trade, preparatory to the abolition of slavery itself.

Well, the United States Constitution left the slave question for every State to manage for itself. It was a question too difficult to settle then, and apparently every man had the hope and belief that in a few years slavery itself would become extinct. Then there happened a great event in the annals of manufactures and commerce. It was discovered that in those States that article which we in this country now so much depend on, could be produced of the best quality necessary for manufacture, and at a moderate price. From that day to this the growth of cotton has increased there, and its consumption has increased here, and a value which no man dreamed of when Jefferson wrote that paper has been given to the slave and to slave industry. Thus it has grown up to that gigantic institution which now threatens either its own overthrow or the overthrow of that which is a million times more valuable—the United States of America.

The crisis at which we have arrived—I say “we,” for, after all, we are nearly as much interested as if I was making this speech in the city of Boston or the city of New York—the crisis, I say, which has now arrived, was inevitable. I say that the conscience of the North, never satisfied with the institution of slavery, was constantly urging some men forward to take a more extreme view of the question; and there grew up naturally a section—it may not have been a very numerous one—in favor of the abolition of slavery. A great and powerful party resolved at least upon a restraint and a control of slavery, so that it should not extend beyond the States and the area which it now occupies. But, if we look at the government of the United States almost ever since the formation of the Union, we shall find the Southern power has been mostly dominant there. If we take thirty-six years after the formation of the present Constitution—I think about 1787—we shall find that for thirty-two of those years every President was a Southern man; and if we take the period from 1828 until 1860, we shall find that, on every election for President, the South voted in the majority.

We know what an election is in the United States for President of the Republic. There is a most extensive suffrage, and there is the ballot-box. The members of the House of Representatives are elected by the same suffrage, and generally they are elected at the same time. It is thus therefore almost inevitable that the House of Representatives is in accord in public policy with the President for the time being. Every four years there springs from the vote created by the whole people a President over that great nation. I think the world offers no finer spectacle than this; it offers no higher dignity; and there is no

greater object of ambition on the political stage on which men are permitted to move. You may point, if you will, to hereditary rulers, to crowns coming down through successive generations of the same family, to thrones based on prescription or on conquest, to sceptres wielded over veteran legions and subject realms—but to my mind there is nothing more worthy of reverence and obedience, and nothing more sacred, than the authority of the freely chosen magistrate of a great and free people; and if there be on earth and among men any right divine to govern, surely it rests with a ruler so chosen and so appointed.

Last year the ceremony of this great election was gone through, and the South, which had been so long successful, found itself defeated. That defeat was followed instantly by secession, and insurrection, and war. In the multitude of articles which have been before us in the newspapers within the last few months, I have no doubt you have seen it stated, as I have seen it, that this question was very much like that upon which the colonies originally revolted against the crown of England. It is amazing how little some newspaper writers know, or how little they think you know. When the War of Independence was begun in America, ninety years ago, there were no representatives there at all. The question then was, whether a Ministry in Downing Street, and a corrupt and borough-mongering Parliament, should continue to impose taxes upon three millions of English subjects who had left their native shores and established themselves in North America. But now the question is not the want of representation, because, as is perfectly notorious, the South is not only represented, but is represented in excess; for, in distributing the number of representatives, which is done

every ten years, three out of every five slaves are counted as freemen, and the number of representatives from the Slave States is consequently so much greater than if the freemen, the white men only, were counted. From this cause the Southern States have twenty members more in the House of Representatives than they would have if the members were apportioned on the same principle as in the Northern Free States. Therefore you will see at once that there is no comparison between the state of things when the colonies revolted, and the state of things now, when this wicked insurrection has broken out.

There is another cause which is sometimes in England assigned for this great misfortune, which is, the protective theories in operation in the Union, and the maintenance of a high tariff. It happens with regard to that, unfortunately, that no American, certainly no one I ever met with, attributed the disasters of the Union to that cause. It is an argument made use of by ignorant Englishmen, but never by informed Americans. I have already shown you that the South, during almost the whole existence of the Union, has been dominant at Washington; and during that period the tariff has existed, and there has been no general dissatisfaction with it. Occasionally, there can be no doubt, their tariff was higher than was thought just, or reasonable, or necessary by some of the States of the South. But the first act of the United States which levied duties upon imports, passed immediately after the Union was formed, recited that "It is necessary for the encouragement and protection of manufactures to levy the duties which follow"; and during the war with England from 1812 to 1815, the people of the United States had to pay for all the articles they brought from Europe many times

over the natural cost of those articles, on account of the interruption to the traffic by the English nation.

When the war was over, it was felt by everybody desirable that they should encourage manufactures in their own country; and seeing that England at that precise moment was passing a law to prevent any wheat coming from America until wheat in England had risen to the price of 84s. per quarter, we may be quite satisfied that the doctrine of protection originally entertained did not find less favor at the close of the war in 1815.

There is one remarkable point with regard to this matter which should not be forgotten. Twelve months ago, at the meeting of the Congress of the United States, on the first Monday in December, when the Congress met, you recollect that there were various propositions of compromise, committee meetings of various kinds to try and devise some mode of settling the question between the North and the South, so that disunion might not go on—though I read carefully everything published in the English papers from the United States on the subject, I do not recollect that in a single instance the question of the tariff was referred to, or any change proposed or suggested in the matter as likely to have any effect whatever upon the question of Secession.

There is another point—whatever might be the influence of the tariff upon the United States, it is as pernicious to the West as it is to the South; and further, that Louisiana, which is a Southern State and a seceded State, has always voted along with Pennsylvania until last year in favor of protection—protection for its sugar—while Pennsylvania wished protection for its coal and iron. But if the tariff was onerous and grievous, was that any reason for this great insurrection? Was there ever a country that had

a tariff, especially in the article of food, more onerous and more cruel than that which we had in this country twenty years ago? We did not secede. We did not rebel. What we did was to raise money for the purpose of distributing among all the people perfect information upon the question; and many men, as you know, devoted all their labors, for several years, to teach the great and wise doctrine of free trade to the people of England. The price of a single gunboat, the equipment of a single regiment, the garrisoning of a single fort, the cessation of their trade for a single day, cost more than it would have cost to have spread among all the intelligent people of the United States the most complete statement of the whole case; and the West and South could easily have revised, or, if need had been, have repealed the tariff altogether.

The question is a very different and a far more grave question. It is a question of slavery, and for thirty years it has constantly been coming to the surface, disturbing social life, and overthrowing almost all political harmony in the working of the United States. In the North there is no secession; there is no collision. These disturbances and this insurrection are found wholly in the South and in the Slave States; and therefore I think that the man who says otherwise, who contends that it is the tariff, or anything whatsoever else than slavery, is either himself deceived or endeavors to deceive others. The object of the South is this, to escape from the majority who wish to limit the area of slavery. They wish to found a Slave State freed from the influence and opinions of freedom. The Free States in the North now stand before the world as the advocates and defenders of freedom and civilization. The Slave States offer themselves for the recognition of a

Christian nation, based upon the foundation, the unchangeable foundation in their eyes, of slavery and barbarism.

I will not discuss the guilt of the men who, ministers of a great nation only last year, conspired to overthrow it. I will not point out or recapitulate the statements of the fraudulent manner in which they disposed of the funds in the national exchequer. I will not point out by name any of the men, in this conspiracy, whom history will designate by titles they would not like to hear; but I say that slavery has sought to break up the most free government in the world, and to found a new State, in the nineteenth century, whose corner-stone is the perpetual bondage of millions of men.

Having thus described what appears to me briefly the literal truth of this matter, what is the course that England would be expected to pursue? We should be neutral as far as regards mingling in the strife. We were neutral in the strife in Italy; but we were not neutral in opinion or sympathy; and we know perfectly well that throughout the whole of Italy at this moment there is a feeling that, though no shot was fired from an English ship, and though no English soldier trod their soil, yet still the opinion of England was potent in Europe, and did much for the creation of the Italian kingdom.

With regard to the United States, you know how much we hate slavery—that is, some years ago we thought we knew; that we have given twenty millions sterling—a million a year, or nearly so, of taxes for ever—to free eight hundred thousand slaves in the English colonies. We knew, or thought we knew, how much we were in love with free government everywhere, although it might not take precisely the same form as our own government. We

were for free government in Italy; we were for free government in Switzerland; and we were for free government, even under a republican form, in the United States of America; and with all this, every man would have said that England would wish the American Union to be prosperous and eternal.

Now, suppose we turn our eyes to the East, to the empire of Russia, for a moment. In Russia, as you all know, there has been one of the most important and magnificent changes of policy ever seen in any country. Within the last year or two, the present Emperor of Russia, following the wishes of his father, has insisted upon the abolition of serfdom in that empire; and twenty-three millions of human beings, lately serfs, little better than real slaves, have been raised to the ranks of freedom. Now, suppose that the millions of the serfs of Russia had been chiefly in the south of Russia. We hear of the nobles of Russia, to whom those serfs belonged in a great measure, that they have been hostile to this change; and there has been some danger that the peace of that empire might be disturbed during the change. Suppose these nobles, for the purpose of maintaining in perpetuity the serfdom of Russia, and barring out twenty-three millions of your fellow-creatures from the rights of freedom, had established a great and secret conspiracy, and that they had risen in great and dangerous insurrection against the Russian Government—I say that you, the people of England, although seven years ago you were in mortal combat with the Russians in the south of Europe—I believe at this moment you would have prayed Heaven in all sincerity and fervor to give strength to the arm and success to the great wishes of the emperor, and that the vile and atrocious insurrection might be suppressed.

Well, but let us look a little at what has been said and done in this country since the period when Parliament rose at the beginning of August. There have been two speeches to which I wish to refer, and in terms of approbation. The Duke of Argyll, a member of the present government—and, though I have not the smallest personal acquaintance with him, I am free to say that I believe him to be one of the most intelligent and liberal of his order—the Duke of Argyll made a speech which was fair and friendly to the government of the United States. Lord Stanley, only a fortnight ago, I think, made a speech which it is impossible to read without remarking the thought, the liberality, and the wisdom by which it is distinguished. He doubted, it is true, whether the Union could be restored. A man need not be hostile, and must not necessarily be unfriendly, to doubt that or the contrary; but he spoke with fairness and friendliness of the government of the United States; and he said that they were right and justifiable in the course they took; and he gave us some advice—which is now more important than at the moment when it was given—that amid the various incidents and accidents of a struggle of this nature, it became a people like this to be very moderate, very calm, and to avoid, as much as possible, any feeling of irritation, which sometimes arises, and sometimes leads to danger.

I mention these two speeches as from Englishmen of great distinction in this country—speeches which I believe will have a beneficial effect on the other side of the Atlantic. Lord John Russell, in the House of Commons, during the last session, made a speech also, in which he rebuked the impertinence of a young member of the House who had spoken about the bursting of the “bubble repub-

lic." It was a speech worthy of the best days of Lord John Russell. But at a later period he spoke at Newcastle on an occasion, something like this, when the inhabitants, or some portion of the inhabitants, of the town invited him to a public dinner. He described the contest in words something like these—I speak from memory only: "The North is contending for empire, the South for independence." Did he mean contending for empire, as England contends for it when making some fresh conquest in India? If he meant that, what he said was not true. But I recollect Lord John Russell, some years ago, in the House of Commons, on an occasion when I made some observation as to the unreasonable expenditure of our colonies, and said that the people of England should not be taxed to defray expenses which the colonies themselves were well able to bear, turned to me with a sharpness which was not necessary, and said, "The honorable member has no objection to make a great empire into a little one; but I have." Perhaps, if he had lived in the United States, if he was a member of the Senate or the House of Representatives there, he would doubt whether it was his duty to consent at once to the destruction of a great country by separation, it may be into two hostile camps, or whether he would not try all the means which were open to him, and would be open to the government, to avert so unlooked-for and so dire a calamity.

There are other speeches that have been made. I will not refer to them by any quotation—I will not, out of pity to some of the men who uttered them. I will not bring their names even before you, to give them an endurance which I hope they will not otherwise obtain. I leave them in the obscurity which they so richly merit. But you know

as well as I do, that, of all the speeches made since the end of the last session of Parliament by public men, by politicians, the majority of them have either displayed a strange ignorance of American affairs, or a stranger absence of that cordiality and friendship which, I maintain, our American kinsmen have a right to look for at our hands.

And if we part from the speakers and turn to the writers, what do we find there? We find that which is reputed abroad, and has hitherto been believed in at home, as the most powerful representative of English opinion—at least of the richer classes—we find in that particular newspaper there has not been since Mr. Lincoln took office, in March last, as President of the United States, one fair and honorable and friendly article on American affairs. Some of you, I dare say, read it; but, fortunately, every district is now so admirably supplied with local newspapers, that I trust in all time to come the people of England will drink of purer streams nearer home, and not of those streams which are muddled by party feeling and political intrigue, and by many motives that tend to anything rather than the enlightenment and advantage of the people. It is said—that very paper has said over and over again—"Why this war? Why not separate peaceably? Why this fratricidal strife?" I hope it is equally averse to fratricidal strife in other districts; for if it be true that God made of one blood all the families of man to dwell on the face of all the earth, it must be fratricidal strife whether we are slaughtering Russians in the Crimea or bombarding towns on the sea-coast of the United States.

Now no one will expect that I should stand forward as the advocate of war, or as the defender of that great sum of all crimes which is involved in war. But when we are dis-

cussing a question of this nature, it is only fair that we should discuss it upon principles which are acknowledged not only in the country where the strife is being carried on, but are universally acknowledged in this country. When I discussed the Russian war, seven or eight years ago, I always condemned it, on principles which were accepted by the government and people of England, and I took my facts from the blue-books presented to Parliament. I take the liberty, then, of doing that in this case; and I say that, looking at the principles avowed in England, and at its policy, there is no man, who is not absolutely a non-resistant in every one sense, who can fairly challenge the conduct of the American Government in this war. It would be a curious thing to find that the party in this country which on every public question affecting England is in favor of war at any cost, when they come to speak of the duty of the government of the United States, is in favor "of peace at any price."

I want to know whether it has ever been admitted by politicians, or statesmen, or people, that a great nation can be broken up at any time by any particular section of any part of that nation. It has been tried occasionally in Ireland, and if it had succeeded history would have said that it was with very good cause. But if anybody tried now to get up a secession or insurrection in Ireland—and it would be infinitely less disturbing to everything than the secession in the United States, because there is a boundary which nobody can dispute—I am quite sure the "Times" would have its "Special Correspondent," and would describe with all the glee and exultation in the world the manner in which the Irish insurrectionists were cut down and made an end of.

Let any man try in this country to restore the heptarchy, do you think that any portion of the people would think that the project could be tolerated for a moment? But if you look at a map of the United States, you will see that there is no country in the world, probably, at this moment, where any plan of separation between the North and the South, as far as the question of boundary is concerned, is so surrounded with insurmountable difficulties. For example, Maryland is a Slave State; but Maryland, by a large majority, voted for the Union. Kentucky is a Slave State, one of the finest in the Union, and containing a fine people; Kentucky has voted for the Union, but has been invaded from the South. Missouri is a Slave State; but Missouri has not seceded, and has been invaded by the South, and there is a secession party in that State. There are parts of Virginia which have formed themselves into a new State, resolved to adhere to the North; and there is no doubt a considerable Northern and Union feeling in the State of Tennessee. I have no doubt there is in every other State. In fact, I am not sure that there is not now within the sound of my voice a citizen of the State of Alabama, who could tell you that in his State the question of secession has never been put to the vote; and that there are great numbers of men, reasonable and thoughtful and just men, in that State, who entirely deplore the condition of things there existing.

Then, what would you do with all those States, and with what we may call the loyal portion of the people of those States? Would you allow them to be dragooned into this insurrection, and into the formation or the becoming parts of a new State, to which they themselves are hostile? And what would you do with the City of Washington? Wash-

ington is in a Slave State. Would anybody have advised that President Lincoln and his Cabinet, with all the members of Congress, of the House of Representatives and the Senate, from the North, with their wives and children, and everybody else who was not positively in favor of the South, should have set off on their melancholy pilgrimage northward, leaving that capital, hallowed to them by such associations—having its name even from the father of their country—leaving Washington to the South, because Washington is situated in a Slave State?

Again, what do you say to the Mississippi River, as you see it upon the map, the "father of waters," rolling its gigantic stream to the ocean? Do you think that the fifty millions which one day will occupy the banks of that river northward, will ever consent that its great stream shall roll through a foreign and it may be a hostile State? And more, there are four millions of negroes in subjection. For them the American Union is directly responsible. They are not secessionists; they are now, as they always were, not citizens nor subjects, but legally under the care and power of the government of the United States. Would you consent that these should be delivered up to the tender mercies of their taskmasters, the defenders of slavery, as an everlasting institution?

But if all had been surrendered without a struggle, what then? What would the writers in this newspaper and other newspapers have said? If a bare rock in your empire, that would not keep a goat—a single goat—alive, be touched by any foreign power, the whole empire is roused to resistance; and if there be, from accident or passion, the smallest insult to your flag, what do your newspaper writers say upon the subject, and what is said in all your towns and upon all

your Exchanges? I will tell you what they would have said if the government of the Northern States had taken their insidious and dishonest advice. They would have said the great republic was a failure, that democracy had murdered patriotism, that history afforded no example of such meanness and of such cowardice; and they would have heaped unmeasured obloquy and contempt upon the people and government who had taken that course.

They tell you, these candid friends of the United States—they tell you that all freedom is gone; that the Habeas Corpus Act, if they ever had one, is known no longer; and that any man may be arrested at the dictum of the President or of the Secretary of State. Well, but in 1848 you recollect, many of you, that there was a small insurrection in Ireland. It was an absurd thing altogether; but what was done then? I saw, in one night, in the House of Commons, a bill for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act passed through all its stages. What more did I see? I saw a bill brought in by the Whig government of that day, Lord John Russell being the Premier, which made speaking against the government and against the crown—which up to that time had been sedition—which proposed to make it felony; and it was only by the greatest exertions of a few of the members that the act, in that particular, was limited to a period of two years. In the same session a bill was brought in called an Alien Bill, which enabled the Home Secretary to take any foreigner whatsoever, not being a naturalized Englishman, and in twenty-four hours to send him out of the country. Although a man might have committed no crime, this might be done to him, apparently only on suspicion.

But suppose that an insurgent army had been so near to

London that you could see its outposts from every suburb of your capital, what then do you think would have been the regard of the government of Great Britain for personal liberty, if it interfered with the necessities, and, as they might think, the salvation of the state? I recollect, in 1848, when the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended in Ireland, that a number of persons in Liverpool, men there of position and of wealth, presented a petition to the House of Commons, praying—what? That the Habeas Corpus Act should not be suspended? No. They were not content with its suspension in Ireland; and they prayed the House of Commons to extend that suspension to Liverpool.

I recollect that at that time—and I am sure my friend Mr. Wilson will bear me out in what I say—the Mayor of Liverpool telegraphed to the Mayor of Manchester, and that messages were sent on to London nearly every hour. The Mayor of Manchester heard from the Mayor of Liverpool that certain Irishmen in Liverpool, conspirators, or fellow-conspirators with those in Ireland, were going to burn the cotton warehouses in Liverpool and the cotton mills of Lancashire. I read that petition from Liverpool. I took it from the table of the House of Commons, and read it, and I handed it over to a statesman of great eminence, who has been but just removed from us—I refer to Sir James Graham, a man not second to any in the House of Commons for his knowledge of affairs and for his great capacity—I handed to him that petition. He read it; and after he had read it, he rose from his seat, and laid it upon the table with a gesture of abhorrence and disgust. Now that was a petition from the town of Liverpool, in which some persons have been making

themselves very ridiculous of late by reason of their conduct on this American question.

There is one more point. It has been said, "How much better it would be"—not for the United States, but—"for us, that these States should be divided." I recollect meeting a gentleman in Bond Street one day before the session was over. He was a rich man, and one whose voice is much heard in the House of Commons; but his voice is not heard when he is on his legs, but when he is cheering other speakers; and he said to me: "After all, this is a sad business about the United States; but still I think it very much better that they should be split up. In twenty years"—or in fifty years, I forget which it was—"they will be so powerful that they will bully all Europe." And a distinguished member of the House of Commons—distinguished there by his eloquence, distinguished more by his many writings—I mean Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton—he did not exactly express a hope, but he ventured on something like a prediction, that the time would come when there would be, I do not know how many, but about as many independent States on the American continent as you can count upon your fingers.

There cannot be a meaner motive than this I am speaking of, in forming a judgment on this question—that it is "better for us"—for whom? the people of England, or the government of England?—that the United States should be severed, and that the North American continent should be as the continent of Europe is, in many States, and subject to all the contentions and disasters which have accompanied the history of the states of Europe. I should say that, if a man had a great heart within him, he would rather look forward to the day when, from that point of

land which is habitable nearest to the Pole, to the shores of the Great Gulf, the whole of that vast continent might become one great confederation of States—without a great army, and without a great navy—not mixing itself up with the entanglements of European politics—without a custom house inside, through the whole length and breadth of its territory—and with freedom everywhere, equality everywhere, law everywhere, peace everywhere—such a confederation would afford at least some hope that man is not forsaken of Heaven, and that the future of our race may be better than the past.

It is a common observation that our friends in America are very irritable. And I think it is very likely, of a considerable number of them, to be quite true. Our friends in America are involved in a great struggle. There is nothing like it before in their or in any history. No country in the world was ever more entitled, in my opinion, to the sympathy and the forbearance of all friendly nations, than are the United States at this moment. They have there some newspapers that are no wiser than ours. They have there some papers, which, up to the election of Mr. Lincoln, were his bitterest and most unrelenting foes, who, when the war broke out, and it was not safe to take the line of Southern support, were obliged to turn round and to appear to adopt the prevalent opinion of the country. But they undertook to serve the South in another way, and that was by exaggerating every difficulty and misstating every fact, if so doing could serve their object of creating distrust between the people of the Northern States and the people of this United Kingdom. If the "Times" in this country has done all that it could do to poison the minds of the people of England, and to irritate the minds of

the people of America, the "New York Herald" I am sorry to say, has done, I think, all that it could, or all that it dared to do, to provoke mischief between the government in Washington and the government in London.

Now there is one thing which I must state that I think they have a solid reason to complain of; and I am very sorry to have to mention it, because it blames our present Foreign Minister, against whom I am not anxious to say a word, and, recollecting his speech in the House of Commons, I should be slow to conclude that he had any feeling hostile to the United States Government. You recollect that during the session—it was on the 14th of May—a proclamation came out which acknowledged the South as a belligerent power, and proclaimed the neutrality of England. A little time before that, I forget how many days, Mr. Dallas, the late Minister from the United States, had left London for Liverpool and America. He did not wish to undertake any affairs for his government, by which he was not appointed—I mean that of President Lincoln—and he left what had to be done to his successor, who was on his way, and whose arrival was daily expected. Mr. Adams, the present Minister from the United States, is a man whom, if he lived in England, you would speak of as belonging to one of the noblest families of the country. His father and his grandfather were Presidents of the United States. His grandfather was one of the great men who achieved the independence of the United States. There is no family in that country having more claims upon what I should call the veneration and the affection of the people than the family of Mr. Adams.

Mr. Adams came to this country. He arrived in Lon-

don on the night of the 13th of May. On the 14th, that proclamation was issued. It was known that he was coming; but he was not consulted; the proclamation was not delayed for a day, although there was nothing pressing, no reason why the proclamation should not have been notified to him. If communications of a friendly nature had taken place with him and with the American Government, they could have found no fault with this step, because it was perhaps inevitable, before the struggle had proceeded far, that this proclamation would be issued. But I have the best reasons for knowing that there is no single thing that has happened during the course of these events which has created more surprise, more irritation, and more distrust in the United States, with respect to this country, than the fact that that proclamation was not delayed one single day, until the Minister from America could come here, and until it could be done, if not with his consent or his concurrence, yet in that friendly manner that would probably have avoided all the unpleasantness which has occurred.

Now I am obliged to say—and I say it with the utmost pain—that if we have not done things that are plainly hostile to the North, and if we have not expressed affection for slavery, and, outwardly and openly, hatred for the Union—I say that there has not been that friendly and cordial neutrality which, if I had been a citizen of the United States, I should have expected; and I say further, that, if there has existed considerable irritation at that, it must be taken as a measure of the high appreciation which the people of those States place upon the opinion of the people of England. If I had been addressing this audience ten days ago, so far as I know, I should have said just what I have said now; and

although, by an untoward event, circumstances are somewhat, even considerably, altered, yet I have thought it desirable to make this statement, with a view, so far as I am able to do it, to improve the opinion of England, and to assuage feelings of irritation in America, if there be any, so that no further difficulties may arise in the progress of this unhappy strife.

But there has occurred an event which was announced to us only a week ago, which is one of great importance, and it may be one of some peril. It is asserted that what is called "international law" has been broken by the seizure of the Southern Commissioners on board an English trading steamer by a steamer of war of the United States. Now, what is international law? You have heard that the opinions of the law officers of the crown are in favor of this view of the case—that the law has been broken. I am not at all going to say that it has not. It would be imprudent in me to set my opinion on a legal question which I have only partially examined, against their opinion on the same question, which I presume they have carefully examined. But this I say, that international law is not to be found in an act of Parliament—it is not in so many clauses. You know that it is difficult to find the law. I can ask the Mayor, or any magistrate around me, whether it is not very difficult to find the law, even when you have found the Act of Parliament, and found the clause. But when you have no Act of Parliament, and no clause, you may imagine that the case is still more difficult.

Now, maritime law, or international law, consists of opinions and precedents for the most part, and it is very unsettled. The opinions are the opinions of men of different countries, given at different times; and the precedents

are not always like each other. The law is very unsettled, and, for the most part, I believe it to be exceedingly bad. In past times, as you know from the histories you read, this country has been a fighting country; we have been belligerents, and, as belligerents, we have carried maritime law, by our own powerful hand, to a pitch that has been very oppressive to foreign, and especially so to neutral, nations. Well, now, for the first time, unhappily—almost for the first time in our history for the last two hundred years—we are not belligerents, but neutrals; and we are disposed to take, perhaps, rather a different view of maritime and international law.

Now, the act which has been committed by the American steamer, in my opinion, whether it was legal or not, was both impolitic and bad. That is my opinion. I think it may turn out, almost certainly, that, so far as the taking of those men from that ship was concerned, it was an act wholly unknown to, and unauthorized by, the American Government. And if the American Government believe, on the opinion of their law officers, that the act is illegal, I have no doubt they will make fitting reparation; for there is no government in the world that has so strenuously insisted upon modifications of international law, and been so anxious to be guided always by the most moderate and merciful interpretation of that law.

Now, our great advisers of the "Times" newspaper have been persuading people that this is merely one of a series of acts which denote the determination of the Washington Government to pick a quarrel with the people of England. Did you ever know anybody who was not very nearly dead drunk, who, having as much upon his hands as he could manage, would offer to fight everybody about him? Do

you believe that the United States Government, presided over by President Lincoln; so constitutional in all his acts, so moderate as he has been—representing at this moment that great party in the United States, happily now in the ascendancy, which has always been especially in favor of peace, and especially friendly to England—do you believe that such a government, having now upon its hands an insurrection of the most formidable character in the South, would invite the armies and the fleets of England to combine with that insurrection, and, it might be, to render it impossible that the Union should ever again be restored? I say, that single statement, whether it came from a public writer or a public speaker, is enough to stamp him forever with the character of being an insidious enemy of both countries.

Well, now, what have we seen during the last week? People have not been, I am told—I have not seen much of it—quite as calm as sensible men should be. Here is a question of law. I will undertake to say, that when you have from the United States Government—if they think the act legal—a statement of their view of the case, they will show you that, fifty or sixty years ago, during the wars of that time, there were scores of cases that were at least as bad as this, and some infinitely worse. And if it were not so late to-night—and I am not anxious now to go into the question further—I could easily place before you cases of extreme outrage committed by us when we were at war, and for many of which, I am afraid, little or no reparation was offered. But let us bear this in mind, that during this struggle incidents and accidents will happen. Bear in mind the advice of Lord Stanley, so opportune and so judicious. Do not let your newspapers, or your public speakers, or any

man, take you off your guard, and bring you into that frame of mind under which your government, if it desires war, may be driven to engage in it; for one may be almost as fatal and as evil as the other.

What can be more monstrous than that we, as we call ourselves, to some extent, an educated, a moral, and a Christian nation—at a moment when an accident of this kind occurs, before we have made a representation to the American Government, before we have heard a word from it in reply—should be all up in arms, every sword leaping from its scabbard, and every man looking about for his pistols and his blunderbusses? I think the conduct pursued—and I have no doubt just the same is pursued by a certain class in America—is much more the conduct of savages than of Christian and civilized men. No, let us be calm. You recollect how we were dragged into the Russian war—how we "drifted" into it. You know that I, at least, have not upon my head any of the guilt of that fearful war. You know that it cost one hundred millions of money to this country; that it cost at least the lives of forty thousand Englishmen; that it disturbed your trade; that it nearly doubled the armies of Europe; that it placed the relations of Europe on a much less peaceful footing than before; and that it did not effect one single thing of all those that it was promised to effect.

I recollect speaking on this subject, within the last two years, to a man whose name I have already mentioned, Sir James Graham, in the House of Commons. He was a Minister at the time of that war. He was reminding me of a severe onslaught which I had made upon him and Lord Palmerston for attending a dinner at the Reform Club when Sir Charles Napier was appointed to the command of the

Baltic fleet; and he remarked, "What a severe thrashing" I had given them in the House of Commons! I said, "Sir James, tell me candidly, did you not deserve it?" He said, "Well, you were entirely right about that war; we were entirely wrong, and we never should have gone into it." And this is exactly what everybody will say, if you go into a war about this business, when it is over. When your sailors and soldiers, so many of them as may be slaughtered, are gone to their last account; when your taxes are increased, your business permanently—it may be—injured; and when embittered feelings for generations have been created between America and England—then your statesmen will tell you that "we ought not to have gone into the war."

But they will very likely say, as many of them tell me, "What could we do in the frenzy of the public mind?" Let them not add to the frenzy, and let us be careful that nobody drives us into that frenzy. Remembering the past, remembering at this moment the perils of a friendly people, and seeing the difficulties by which they are surrounded, let us, I entreat of you, see if there be any real moderation in the people of England, and if magnanimity, so often to be found among individuals, is absolutely wanting in a great nation.

Now, government may discuss this matter—they may arrange it—they may arbitrate it. I have received here, since I came into the room, a despatch from a friend of mine in London, referring to this matter. I believe some portion of it is in the papers this evening, but I have not seen them. He states that General Scott, whom you know by name, who has come over from America to France, being in a bad state of health—the general lately of the

American army, and a man whose reputation in that country is hardly second to that which the Duke of Wellington held during his lifetime in this country—General Scott has written a letter on the American difficulty. He denies that the Cabinet of Washington had ordered the seizure of the Southern Commissioners, if found under a neutral flag. The question of legal right involved in the seizure, the general thinks a very narrow ground on which to force a quarrel with the United States. As to Messrs. Slidell and Mason being or not being contraband, the general answers for it, that, if Mr. Seward cannot convince Earl Russell that they bore that character, Earl Russell will be able to convince Mr. Seward that they did not. He pledges himself that, if this government cordially agreed with that of the United States in establishing the immunity of neutrals from the oppressive right of search and seizure on suspicion, the Cabinet of Washington will not hesitate to purchase so great a boon to peaceful trading vessels.

Now, then, before I sit down, let me ask you what is this people, about which so many men in England at this moment are writing, and speaking, and thinking, with harshness, I think with injustice, if not with great bitterness? Two centuries ago, multitudes of the people of this country found a refuge on the North American continent, escaping from the tyranny of the Stuarts and from the bigotry of Laud. Many noble spirits from our country made great experiments in favor of human freedom on that continent. Bancroft, the great historian of his own country, has said, in his own graphic and emphatic language, "The history of the colonization of America is the history of the crimes of Europe." From that time down to our own

period, America has admitted the wanderers from every clime. Since 1815, a time which many here remember, and which is within my lifetime, more than three millions of persons have emigrated from the United Kingdom to the United States. During the fifteen years from 1845 or 1846 to 1859 or 1860—a period so recent that we all remember the most trivial circumstances that have happened in that time—during those fifteen years more than two million three hundred and twenty thousand persons left the shores of the United Kingdom as emigrants for the States of North America.

At this very moment, then, there are millions in the United States who personally, or whose immediate parents, have at one time been citizens of this country. They found a home in the Far West; they subdued the wilderness; they met with plenty there, which was not afforded them in their native country; and they have become a great people. There may be persons in England who are jealous of those States. There may be men who dislike democracy, and who hate a republic; there may be even those whose sympathies warm toward the slave oligarchy of the South. But of this I am certain, that only misrepresentation the most gross or calumny the most wicked can sever the tie which unites the great mass of the people of this country with their friends and brethren beyond the Atlantic.

Now, whether the Union will be restored or not, or the South achieve an unhonored independence or not, I know not, and I predict not. But this I think I know—that in a few years, a very few years, the twenty millions of freemen in the North will be thirty millions, or even fifty millions—a population equal to or exceeding that of this kingdom. When that time comes, I pray that it may not be said

among them, that, in the darkest hour of their country's trials, England, the land of their fathers, looked on with icy coldness and saw unmoved the perils and calamities of their children. As for me, I have but this to say: I am but one in this audience, and but one in the citizenship of this country; but if all other tongues are silent, mine shall speak for that policy which gives hope to the bondmen of the South, and which tends to generous thoughts, and generous words, and generous deeds, between the two great nations who speak the English language, and from their origin are alike entitled to the English name.

AGAINST MR. ROEBUCK'S MOTION FOR RECOGNITION
OF THE SOUTHERN CONFEDERACY

HOUSE OF COMMONS, JUNE 30, 1863

I WILL not attempt to follow the noble lord in the labored attack which he has made upon the Treasury Bench, for these two reasons: that he did not appear to me very much to understand what it was he was condemning them for; and, again, I am not in the habit of defending gentlemen who sit on that bench. I will address myself to the question before the House, which I think the House generally feels to be very important, although I am quite satisfied that they do not feel it to be a practical one. Neither do I think that the House will be disposed to take any course in support of the honorable gentleman who introduced the resolution now before us.

We sometimes are engaged in discussions, and have great difficulty to know what we are about; but the honor-

able gentleman left us in no kind of doubt when he sat down. He proposed a resolution, in words which, under certain circumstances and addressed to certain parties, might end in offensive or injurious consequences. Taken in connection with his character, and with the speech he has made to-night, and with the speech he has recently made elsewhere on this subject, I may say that he would have come to about the same conclusion if he had proposed to address the crown inviting the Queen to declare war against the United States of America. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, who is known not to be very zealous in the particular line of opinion that I have adopted, addressed the honorable gentleman in the smoothest language possible, but still he was obliged to charge him with the tone of bitter hostility which marked his speech.

On a recent occasion the honorable member addressed some members of his constituency—I do not mean in his last speech, I mean in the speech in August last year—in which he entered upon a course of prophecy which, like most prophecies in our day, does not happen to come true. But he said then what he said to-night, that the American people and government were overbearing. He did not tell his constituents that the government of the United States had, almost during the whole of his lifetime, been conducted by his friends of the South. He said that, if they were divided, they would not be able to bully the whole world; and he made use of these expressions: "The North will never be our friends; of the South you can make friends—they are Englishmen—they are not the scum and refuse of the world."

Mr. Roebuck: "Allow me to correct that statement. What I said I now state to the House, that the men of the

South were Englishmen, but that the army of the North was composed of the scum of Europe."

Mr. Bright: I take, of course, that explanation of the honorable and learned gentleman, with this explanation from me, that there is not, so far as I can find, any mention near that paragraph, and I think there is not in the speech a single word, about the army.

Mr. Roebuck: "I assure you I said that."

Mr. Bright: Then I take it for granted that the honorable and learned gentleman said that, or that if he said what I have read he greatly regrets it.

Mr. Roebuck: "No, I did not say it."

Mr. Bright: The honorable and learned gentleman in his resolution speaks of other powers. But he has unceremoniously got rid of all the powers but France, and he comes here to-night with a story of an interview with a man whom he describes as the great ruler of France—tells us of a conversation with him—asks us to accept the lead of the Emperor of the French on, I will undertake to say, one of the greatest questions that ever was submitted to the British Parliament. But it is not long since the honorable and learned gentleman held very different language. I recollect in this House, only about two years ago, that the honorable and learned gentleman said: "I hope I may be permitted to express in respectful terms my opinion, even though it should affect so great a potentate as the Emperor of the French. I have no faith in the Emperor of the French." On another occasion the honorable and learned gentleman said—not, I believe, in this House—"I am still of opinion that we have nothing but animosity and bad faith to look for from the French emperor." And he went on to say that still, though he had been laughed

at, he adopted the patriotic character of "Tear 'em," and was still at his post.

And when the honorable and learned gentleman came back, I think from his expedition to Cherbourg, does the House recollect the language he used on that occasion—language which, if it expressed the sentiments which he felt, at least I think he might have been content to have withheld? If I am not mistaken, referring to the salutation between the Emperor of the French and the queen of these kingdoms, he said, "When I saw his perjured lips touch that hallowed cheek." And now, sir, the honorable and learned gentleman has been to Paris, introduced there by the honorable member for Sunderland, and he has sought to become as it were in the palace of the French emperor a co-conspirator with him to drag this country into a policy which I maintain is as hostile to its interests as it would be degrading to its honor.

But then the high contracting parties, I suspect, are not agreed, because I will say this in justice to the French emperor, that there has never come from him in public, nor from any one of his ministers, nor is there anything to be found in what they have written, that is tinged in the smallest degree with that bitter hostility which the honorable and learned gentleman has constantly exhibited to the United States of America and their people. France, if not wise in this matter, is at least not unfriendly. The honorable and learned member, in my opinion—indeed I am sure—is not friendly, and I believe he is not wise.

But now, on this subject, without speaking disrespectfully of the great potentate who has taken the honorable and learned gentleman into his confidence, I must say that the emperor runs the risk of being far too much represented

in this House. We have now two—I will not call them envoys extraordinary, but most extraordinary. And, if report speaks true, even they are not all. The honorable member for King's County (Mr. Hennessy)—I do not see him in his place—came back the other day from Paris, and there were whispers that he had seen the great ruler of France, and that he could tell everybody in the most confidential manner that the emperor was ready to make a spring at Russia for the sake of delivering Poland, and that he only waited for a word from the Prime Minister of England.

I do not understand the policy of the emperor if these new ministers of his tell the truth. For, sir, if one gentleman says that he is about to make war with Russia, and another that he is about to make war with America, I am disposed to look at what he is already doing. I find that he is holding Rome against the opinion of all Italy. He is conquering Mexico by painful steps, every footstep marked by devastation and blood. He is warring, in some desultory manner, in China, and for aught I know he may be about to do it in Japan. I say that, if he is to engage, at the same time, in dismembering the greatest Eastern Empire and the great Western Republic, he has a greater ambition than Louis XIV., a greater daring than the first of his name; and that, if he endeavors to grasp these great transactions, his dynasty may fall and be buried in the ruins of his own ambition.

I can say only one sentence upon the question to which the noble lord has directed so much attention. I understand that we have not heard all the story from Paris, and further, that it is not at all remarkable, seeing that the secret has been confided to two persons, that we have not heard it correctly. I saw my honorable friend, the mem-

ber for Sunderland, near me, and his face underwent remarkable contortions during the speech of the honorable and learned gentleman, and I felt perfectly satisfied that he did not agree with what his colleague was saying. I am told there is in existence a little memorandum which contains an account of what was said and done at that interview in Paris; and before the discussion closes we shall no doubt have that memorandum produced, and from it know how far these two gentlemen are agreed.

I now come to the proposition which the honorable and learned gentleman has submitted to the House, and which he has already submitted to a meeting of his constituents at Sheffield. At that meeting, on the 27th of May, the honorable and learned gentleman used these words: "What I have to consider is, what are the interests of England: what is for her interests I believe to be for the interests of the world." Now, leaving out of consideration the latter part of that statement, if the honorable and learned gentleman will keep to the first part of it, then what we have now to consider in this question is, what is for the interest of England. But the honorable and learned gentleman has put it to-night in almost as offensive a way as he did before at Sheffield, and has said that the United States would not bully the world if they were divided and subdivided; for he went so far as to contemplate division into more than two independent sections. I say that the whole of his case rests upon a miserable jealousy of the United States, or on what I may term a base fear. It is a fear which appears to me just as groundless as any of those panics by which the honorable and learned gentleman has attempted to frighten the country.

There never was a State in the world which was less

capable of aggression with regard to Europe than the United States of America. I speak of its government, of its confederation, of the peculiarities of its organization; for the House will agree with me, that nothing is more peculiar than the fact of the great power which the separate States, both of the North and South, exercise upon the policy and course of the country. I will undertake to say, that, unless in a question of overwhelming magnitude, which would be able to unite any people, it would be utterly hopeless to expect that all the States of the American Union would join together to support the central government in any plan of aggression on England or any other country of Europe.

Besides, nothing can be more certain than this, that the government which is now in power, and the party which have elected Mr. Lincoln to office, is a moral and peaceable party, which has been above all things anxious to cultivate the best possible state of feeling with regard to England. The honorable and learned gentleman, of all men, ought not to entertain this fear of United States aggression, for he is always boasting of his readiness to come into the field himself. I grant that it would be a great necessity indeed which would justify a conscription in calling out the honorable and learned gentleman, but I say he ought to consider well before he spreads these alarms among the people. For the sake of this miserable jealousy, and that he may help to break up a friendly nation, he would depart from the usages of nations, and create an everlasting breach between the people of England and the people of the United States of America. He would do more; and, notwithstanding what he has said to-night, I may put this as my strongest argument against his case—he would throw the

weight of England into the scale in favor of the cause of slavery.

I want to show the honorable and learned gentleman that England is not interested in the course he proposes we should take; and when I speak of interests, I mean the commercial interests, the political interests, and the moral interests of the country. And first, with regard to the supply of cotton, in which the noble lord the member for Stamford takes such a prodigious interest. I must explain to the noble lord that I know a little about cotton. I happen to have been engaged in that business—not all my life, for the noble lord has seen me here for twenty years—but my interests have been in it; and at this moment the firm of which I am a member have no less than six mills, which have been at a stand for nearly a year, owing to the impossibility of working under the present conditions of the supply of cotton. I live among a people who live by this trade; and there is no man in England who has a more direct interest in it than I have. Before the war, the supply of cotton was little and costly, and every year it was becoming more costly, for the supply did not keep pace with the demand.

The point that I am about to argue is this: I believe that the war which is now raging in America is more likely to abolish slavery than not, and more likely to abolish it than any other thing that can be proposed in the world. I regret very much that the pride and passion of men are such as to justify me in making this statement. The supply of cotton under slavery must always be insecure. The House felt so in past years; for at my recommendation they appointed a committee, and but for the folly of a foolish minister they would have appointed a special commission to India at my

request. Is there any gentleman in this House who will not agree with me in this—that it would be far better for our great Lancashire industry that our supply of cotton should be grown by free labor than by slave labor?

Before the war, the whole number of negroes engaged in the production of cotton was about one million—that is, about a fourth of the whole of the negroes in the Slave States. The annual increase in the number of negroes growing cotton was about twenty-five thousand—only two and a half per cent. It was impossible for the Southern States to keep up with their growth of sugar, rice, tobacco, and their ordinary slave productions, and at the same time to increase the growth of cotton more than at a rate corresponding with the annual increase of negroes. Therefore you will find that the quantity of cotton grown, taking ten years together, increased only at the rate of about one hundred thousand bales a year. But that was nothing like the quantity which we required. That supply could not be increased, because the South did not cultivate more than probably one and a half per cent of the land which was capable of cultivation for cotton.

The great bulk of the land in the Southern States is uncultivated. Ten thousand square miles are appropriated to the cultivation of cotton; but there are six hundred thousand square miles, or sixty times as much land, which is capable of being cultivated for cotton. It was, however, impossible that the land should be so cultivated, because, although you had climate and sun, you had no labor. The institution of slavery forbade free labor men in the North to come to the South; and every immigrant that landed in New York from Europe knew that the Slave States were no States for him, and therefore he went north or west.

The laws of the United States, the sentiments of Europe and of the world, being against any opening of the slave trade, the planters of the South were shut up, and the annual increase in the supply of cotton could increase only in the same proportion as the annual increase in the number of their negroes.

There is only one other point with regard to that matter which is worth mentioning. The honorable and learned gentleman, the member for Sheffield, will understand it, although on some points he seems to be peculiarly dark. If a planter in the Southern States wanted to grow one thousand bales of cotton a year, he would require about two hundred negroes. Taking them at five hundred dollars, or one hundred pounds each, which is not more than half the price of a first-class hand, the cost of the two hundred would be twenty thousand pounds. To grow one thousand bales of cotton a year you require not only to possess an estate, machinery, tools, and other things necessary to carry on the cotton-growing business, but you must find a capital of twenty thousand pounds to buy the actual laborers by whom the plantation is to be worked; and therefore, as every gentleman will see at once, this great trade, to a large extent, was shut up in the hands of men who were required to be richer than would be necessary if slavery did not exist.

Thus the plantation business to a large extent became a monopoly, and therefore even on that account the production of cotton was constantly limited and controlled. I was speaking to a gentleman the other day from Mississippi. I believe no man in America or in England is more acquainted with the facts of this case. He has been for many years a Senator from the State of Mississippi. He

told me that every one of these facts was true, and said, "I have no doubt whatever that in ten years after freedom in the South, or after freedom in conjunction with the North, the production of cotton will be doubled, and cotton will be forwarded to the consumers of the world at a much less price than we have had it for many years past."

I shall turn for a moment to the political interest, to which the honorable and learned gentleman paid much more attention than to the commercial. The more I consider the course of this war, the more I come to the conclusion that it is improbable in future that the United States will be broken into separate republics. I do not come to the conclusion that the North will conquer the South. But I think the conclusion to which I am more disposed to come now than at any time since the breaking out of the war is this—that if a separation should occur for a time, still the interest, the sympathies, the sentiments, the necessities of the whole continent, and its ambition also, which, as honorable gentlemen have mentioned, seems to some people to be a necessity, render it highly probable that the continent would still be united under one central government. I may be quite mistaken. I do not express that opinion with any more confidence than honorable gentlemen have expressed theirs in favor of a permanent dissolution; but now is not this possible—that the Union may be again formed on the basis of the South? There are persons who think that possible. I hope it is not, but we cannot say that it is absolutely impossible.

Is it not possible that the Northern government may be baffled in their military operations? Is it not possible that, by their own incapacity, they may be humiliated before their own people? And is it not even possible that the party

which you please to call the Peace party in the North, but which is in no sense a peace party, should unite with the South, and that the Union should be reconstituted on the basis of Southern opinions and of the Southern social system? Is it not possible, for example, that the Southern people, and those in their favor, should appeal to the Irish population of America against the negroes, between whom there has been little sympathy and little respect; and is it not possible they should appeal to the commercial classes of the North—and the rich commercial classes in all countries, from the uncertainty of their possessions and the fluctuation of their interests, are rendered always timid and very often corrupt—is it not possible, I say, that they might prefer the union of their whole country upon the basis of the South, rather than that Union which many members of this House look upon with so much apprehension?

If that should ever take place—but I believe, with my honorable friend below me (Mr. Forster), in the moral government of the world, and therefore I cannot believe that it will take place; but if it were to take place, with their great armies, and with their great navy, and their almost unlimited power, they might seek to drive England out of Canada, France out of Mexico, and whatever nations are interested in them out of the islands of the West Indies; and you might then have a great State built upon slavery and war, instead of that free State to which I look, built up upon an educated people, upon general freedom, and upon morality in government.

Now there is one more point to which the honorable and learned gentleman will forgive me if I allude—he does not appear to me to think it of great importance—and that is,

the morality of this question. The right honorable gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the honorable gentleman who spoke from the bench behind—and I think the noble lord, if I am not mistaken—referred to the carnage which is occasioned by this lamentable strife. Well, carnage, I presume, is the accompaniment of all war. Two years ago the press of London ridiculed very much the battles of the United States, in which nobody was killed and few were hurt. There was a time when I stood up in this House, and pointed out the dreadful horrors of war. There was a war waged by this country in the Crimea; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with an uneasy conscience, is constantly striving to defend that struggle. That war—for it lasted about the same time that the American war has lasted—at least destroyed as many lives as are estimated to have been destroyed in the United States.

My honorable friend, the member for Montrose, who, I think, is not in the House, made a speech in Scotland some time last year, in which he gave the numbers which were lost by Russia in that war. An honorable friend near me observes that some people do not reckon the Russians for anything. I say, if you will add the Russians to the English, and the two to the French, and the three to the Sardinians, and the four to the Turks, that more lives were lost in the invasion of the Crimea, in the two years that it lasted, than have been lost hitherto in the American war. That is no defence of the carnage of the American war; but let honorable gentlemen bear in mind that, when I protested against the carnage in the Crimea—for an object which few could comprehend and nobody can fairly explain—I was told that I was actuated by a morbid sentimentality. Well, if I am converted, if I view the mortality in war

with less horror than I did then, it must be attributed to the arguments of honorable gentlemen opposite and on the Treasury Bench; but the fact is, I view this carnage just as I viewed that, with only this difference, that while our soldiers perished three thousand miles from home in a worthless and indefensible cause, these men were on their own soil, and every man of them knew for what he enlisted and for what purpose he was to fight.

Now, I will ask the right honorable gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and those who are of opinion with him on this question of slaughter in the American war—a slaughter which I hope there is no honorable member here, and no person out of this House, that does not in his calm moments look upon with grief and horror—to consider what was the state of things before the war. It was this: that every year in the Slave States of America there were one hundred and fifty thousand children born into the world—born with the badge and the doom of slavery—born to the liability by law, and by custom, and by the devilish cupidity of man, to the lash and to the chain and to the branding iron, and to be taken from their families and carried they know not where.

I want to know whether you feel as I feel upon this question. When I can get down to my home from this House, I find half a dozen little children playing upon my hearth. How many members are there who can say with me, that the most innocent, the most pure, the most holy joy which in their past years they have felt, or in their future years they have hoped for, has not arisen from contact and association with our precious children? Well, then, if that be so—if, when the hand of Death takes one of those flowers from our dwelling, our heart is

overwhelmed with sorrow and our household is covered with gloom; what would it be if our children were brought up to this infernal system—one hundred and fifty thousand of them every year brought into the world in these Slave States, among these “gentlemen,” among this “chivalry,” among these men that we can make our friends?

Do you forget the thousand-fold griefs and the countless agonies which belonged to the silent conflict of slavery before the war began? It is all very well for the honorable and learned gentleman to tell me, to tell this House—he will not tell the country with any satisfaction to it—that slavery, after all, is not so bad a thing. The brother of my honorable friend, the member for South Durham, told me that in North Carolina he himself saw a woman whose every child, ten in number, had been sold when they grew up to the age at which they would fetch a price to their master.

I have not heard a word to-night of another matter—the Proclamation of the President of the United States. The honorable and learned gentleman spoke somewhere in the country, and he had not the magnanimity to abstain from a statement which I was going to say he must have known had no real foundation. I can make all allowance for the passion—and I was going to say the malice—but I will say the ill-will of the honorable and learned gentleman; but I make no allowance for his ignorance. I make no allowance for that, because if he is ignorant it is his own fault, for God has given him an intellect which ought to keep him from ignorance on a question of this magnitude. I now take that Proclamation. What do you propose to do? You propose by your resolution to help the South, if possible, to gain and sustain its independence. Nobody

doubts that. The honorable and learned gentleman will not deny it. But what becomes of the Proclamation? I should like to ask any lawyer in what light we stand as regards that Proclamation? To us there is only one country in what was called the United States; there is only one President, there is only one general Legislature, there is only one law; and if that Proclamation be lawful anywhere, we are not in a condition to deny its legality, because at present we know no President Davis, nor do we know the men who are about him. We have our consuls in the South, but recognizing only one Legislature, one President, one law. So far as we are concerned, that Proclamation is a legal and effective document.

I want to know, to ask you, the House of Commons, whether you have turned back to your own proceedings in 1834, and traced the praises which have been lavished upon you for thirty years by the great and good men of other countries—and whether, after what you did at that time, you believe that you will meet the views of the thoughtful, moral, and religious people of England, when you propose to remit to slavery three millions of negroes in the Southern States, who in our views, and regarding the Proclamation of the only President of the United States as a legal document, are certainly and to all intents and purposes free? ["Oh!"] The honorable and learned gentleman may say "Oh!" and shake his head lightly, and be scornful at this. He has managed to get rid of all those feelings under which all men, black and white, like to be free. He has talked of the cant and hypocrisy of these men. Was Wilberforce, was Clarkson, was Buxton—I might run over the whole list—were these men hypocrites, and had they nothing about them but cant?

I could state something about the family of my honorable friend below me (Mr. Foster), which I almost fear to state in his presence; but his revered father—a man unsurpassed in character, not equalled by many in intellect, and approached by few in service—laid down his life in a Slave State in America, while carrying to the Governors and Legislatures of every Slave State the protest of himself and his sect against the enormity of that odious system.

In conclusion, sir, I have only this to say—that I wish to take a generous view of this question—a view, I say, generous with regard to the people with whom we are in amity, whose Minister we receive here, and who receive our Minister in Washington. We see that the government of the United States has for two years past been contending for its life, and we know that it is contending necessarily for human freedom. That government affords the remarkable example—offered for the first time in the history of the world—of a great government coming forward as the organized defender of law, freedom, and equality.

Surely honorable gentlemen opposite cannot be so ill-informed as to say that the revolt of the Southern States is in favor of freedom and equality. In Europe often, and in some parts of America, when there has been insurrection, it has generally been of the suffering against the oppressor, and rarely has it been found, and not more commonly in our history than in the history of any other country, that the government has stepped forward as the organized defender of freedom—of the wide and general freedom of those under its rule. With such a government, in such a contest, with such a foe, the honorable and learned gentleman, the member for Sheffield, who professes to be more an Englishman than most Englishmen,

asks us to throw into the scale against it the weight of the hostility of England.

I have not said a word with regard to what may happen to England if we go into war with the United States. It will be a war upon the ocean—every ship that belongs to the two nations will, as far as possible, be swept from the seas. But when the troubles in America are over—be they ended by the restoration of the Union, or by separation—that great and free people, the most instructed in the world—there is not an American to be found in the New England States who cannot read and write, and there are not three men in one hundred in the whole Northern States who cannot read and write—and those who cannot read and write are those who have recently come from Europe—I say the most instructed people in the world, and the most wealthy—if you take the distribution of wealth among the whole people—will have a wound in their hearts by your act which a century may not heal; and the posterity of some of those who now hear my voice may look back with amazement, and I will say with lamentation, at the course which was taken by the honorable and learned gentleman, and by such honorable members as may choose to follow his leading. [“No! No!”] I suppose the honorable gentlemen who cry “No!” will admit that we sometimes suffer from the errors of our ancestors. There are few persons who will not admit that, if their fathers had been wiser, their children would have been happier.

We know the cause of this revolt, its purposes, and its aims. Those who made it have not left us in darkness respecting their intentions, but what they are to accomplish is still hidden from our sight; and I will abstain now, as I have always abstained with regard to it, from predicting

what is to come. I know what I hope for—and what I shall rejoice in—but I know nothing of future facts that will enable me to express a confident opinion. Whether it will give freedom to the race which white men have trampled in the dust, and whether the issue will purify a nation steeped in crimes committed against that race, is known only to the Supreme. In his hands are alike the breath of man and the life of states. I am willing to commit to him the issue of this dreaded contest; but I implore of him, and I beseech this House, that my country may lift nor hand nor voice in aid of the most stupendous act of guilt that history has recorded in the annals of mankind.

THE CANADIAN FORTIFICATIONS

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MARCH 23, 1865

I SHALL ask the attention of the House for only a few moments. If the honorable member (Mr. Bentinck) divides, I shall go into the same lobby with him. I am afraid that, in making that announcement, I shall excite some little alarm in the mind of the honorable gentleman. I wish therefore to say, that I shall not, in going into the lobby, agree with him in many of the statements he has made. The right honorable gentleman (Mr. Disraeli) said, that he approached the military question with great diffidence, and I was very glad to see any signs of diffidence in that quarter. After that explanation, he asked the House, with a triumphant air, whether there is any difficulty in defending a frontier of one thousand or fifteen hundred miles, and whether the practicability of doing so

is a new doctrine in warfare. But one thousand or fifteen hundred miles of frontier to defend at the centre of your power, is one thing; but at three thousand or four thousand miles from the centre, it is an entirely different thing. I venture to say, that there is not a man in this House, or a sensible man out of it, who, apart from the consideration of this vote, or some special circumstances attending it, believes that the people of this country could attempt a successful defence of the frontier of Canada against the whole power of the United States. I said the other night, that I hoped we should not now talk folly, and hereafter, in the endeavor to be consistent, act folly. We all know perfectly well that we are talking folly when we say that the government of this country would send either ships or men to make an effectual defence of Canada against the power of the United States, supposing war to break out. Understand, I am not in the least a believer in the probability of war, but I will discuss the question for one moment as if war were possible. I suppose some men in this House think it probable. But if it be possible or probable, and if you have to look this difficulty in the face, there is no extrication from it but in the neutrality or independence of Canada.

I agree with those members who say that it is the duty of a great empire to defend every portion of it. I admit that as a general proposition, though honorable gentlemen opposite, and some on this side, do not apply that rule to the United States. But, admitting that rule, and supposing that we are at all points unprepared for such a catastrophe, may we not, as reasonable men, look ahead, and try if it be not possible to escape from it? [An honorable member: "Run away?"] No, not by running away, though there are many circumstances in which brave men



CHARLES STEWART PARNELL

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run away; and you may get into difficulty on this Canadian question which may make you look back and wish that you had run away a good time ago. I object to this vote on a ground which, I believe, has not been raised by any member in the present discussion. I am not going to say that the expenditure of fifty thousand pounds is a matter of great consequence to this country, that the expenditure of this money in the proposed way will be taken as a menace by the United States. I do not think that this can be fairly said; for whether building fortifications at Quebec be useless or not, such a proceeding is not likely to enable the Canadians to overrun the State of New York. The United States, I think, will have no right to complain of this expenditure. The utmost it can do will be to show them that some persons, and perhaps the government of this country, have some little distrust of them, and so far it may do injury. I complain of the expenditure and the policy announced by the Colonial Secretary, on a ground which I thought ought to have been urged by the noble lord, the member for Wick, who is a sort of half Canadian. He made a speech which I listened to with great pleasure, and told the House what some of us, perhaps, did not know before; but if I had been connected, as he is, with Canada, I would have addressed the House from a Canadian point of view.

What is it that the member for Oxford says? He states, in reference to the expenditure for the proposed fortifications, that, though a portion of the expenditure is to be borne by us, the main portion is to be borne by Canada; but I venture to tell him, that, if there shall be any occasion to defend Canada at all, it will not arise from anything Canada does, but from what England does; and therefore I

protest against the doctrine that the Cabinet in London may get into difficulties, and ultimately into war, with the Cabinet at Washington; that because Canada lies adjacent to the United States, and may consequently become a great battlefield, this United Kingdom has a right to call on Canada for the main portion of that expenditure. Who has asked you to spend fifty thousand pounds, and the hundreds of thousands which may be supposed to follow, but which perhaps Parliament may be indisposed hereafter to grant? What is the proportion which Canada is to bear? If we are to spend two hundred thousand pounds at Quebec, is Canada to spend four hundred thousand pounds at Montreal? If Canada is to spend double whatever we may spend, is it not obvious that every Canadian will ask himself—what is the advantage of the connection between Canada and England?

Every Canadian knows perfectly well, and nobody better than the noble lord, the member for Wick, that there is no more prospect of a war between Canada and the United States alone than between the Empire of France and the Isle of Man. If that is so, why should the Canadians be taxed beyond all reason, as the Colonial Secretary proposes to tax them, for a policy not Canadian, and for a calamity which, if ever it occurs, must occur from some transactions between England and the United States? There are gentlemen here who know a good deal of Canada, and I see behind me one who knows perfectly well what is the condition of the Canadian finances. We complain that Canada levies higher duties on British manufactures than the United States did before the present war, and much higher than France does. But when we complain to Canada of this, and say it is very unpleasant usage from

a part of our empire, the Canadians reply that their expenditure is so much, and their debt, with the interest on it, so much, that they are obliged to levy these heavy duties. If the Canadian finances are in the unfortunate position described; if the credit of Canada is not very good in the market of this country; if you see what are the difficulties of the Canadians during a period of peace; consider what will be their difficulties if the doctrine of the Colonial Secretary be carried out, which is that whatever expenditure is necessary for the defence of Canada, though we bear a portion, the main part must be borne by Canada.

We must then come to this inevitable conclusion. Every Canadian will say, "We are close alongside of a great nation; our parent state is three thousand miles away; there are litigious, and there may be even warlike, people in both nations, and they may occasion the calamity of a great war; we are peaceable people, having no foreign politics, happily; we may be involved in war, and while the cities of Great Britain are not touched by a single shell, nor one of its fields ravaged, there is not a city or a village in this Canada in which we live which will not be liable to the ravages of war on the part of our powerful neighbor." Therefore the Canadians will say, unless they are unlike all other Englishmen (who appear to have more sense the further they go from their own country), that it would be better for Canada to be disentangled from the politics of England, and to assume the position of an independent State.

I suspect from what has been stated by official gentlemen in the present government and in previous governments, that there is no objection to the independence of Canada whenever Canada may wish it. I have been glad to hear those statements, because I think they mark an extraordi-

nary progress in sound opinions in this country. I recollect the noble lord at the head of the Foreign Office on one occasion being very angry with me: he said I wished to make a great empire less; but a great empire, territorially, may be lessened without its power and authority in the world being diminished. I believe if Canada now, by a friendly separation from this country, became an independent State, choosing its own form of government—monarchical, if it liked a monarchy, or republican, if it preferred a republic—it would not be less friendly to England, and its tariff would not be more adverse to our manufactures than it is now. In the case of a war with America, Canada would then be a neutral country; and the population would be in a state of greater security. Not that I think there is any fear of war, but the government admit that it may occur by their attempt to obtain money for these fortifications. I object, therefore, to this vote, not on that account, nor even because it causes some distrust, or may cause it, in the United States; but I object to it mainly because I think we are commencing a policy which we shall either have to abandon, because Canada will not submit to it, or else which will bring upon Canada a burden in the shape of fortification expenditure that will make her more and more dissatisfied with this country, and that will lead rapidly to her separation from us. I do not object to that separation in the least; I believe it would be better for us and better for her. But I think that, of all the misfortunes which could happen between us and Canada, this would be the greatest, that her separation should take place after a period of irritation and estrangement, and that we should have on that continent to meet another element in some degree hostile to this country.

I am sorry, sir, that the noble lord at the head of the government, and his colleagues, have taken this course; but it appears to me to be wonderfully like almost everything which the government does. It is a government apparently of two parts, the one part pulling one way and the other part pulling another, and the result generally is something which does not please anybody, or produce any good effect in any direction. They now propose a scheme which has just enough in it to create distrust and irritation, enough to make it in some degree injurious, and they do not do enough to accomplish any of the objects for which, according to their statements, the proposition is made. Somebody asked the other night whether the administration was to rule, or the House of Commons. Well, I suspect from the course of the debates, that on this occasion the administration will be allowed to rule. We are accustomed to say that the government suggests a thing on its own responsibility, and therefore we will allow them to do it. But the fact is, that the government knows no more of this matter than any other dozen gentlemen in this House. They are not a bit more competent to form an opinion upon it. They throw it down on the table and ask us to discuss and vote it.

I should be happy to find the House, disregarding all the intimations that war is likely, anxious not to urge Canada into incurring an expenditure which she will not bear, and which, if she will not bear, must end in one of two things—either in throwing the whole burden upon us, or in breaking up, perhaps suddenly and in anger, the connection between us and that colony, and in making our future relations with her most unsatisfactory. I do not place much reliance on the speech of the right honorable

member for Buckinghamshire, not because he cannot judge of the question just as well as I or any one of us can do, but because I notice that in matters of this kind gentlemen on that (the Opposition) bench, whatever may have been their animosities toward the gentlemen on this (the Treasury) bench on other questions, shake hands. They may tell you that they have no connection with the House over the way, but the fact is, their connection is most intimate. And if the right honorable member for Buckinghamshire were now sitting on the Treasury bench, and the noble viscount were sitting opposite to him, the noble viscount, I have no doubt, would give him the very same support that he now receives from the right honorable gentleman.

This seems to me a question so plain, so much on the surface, appealing so much to our common-sense, having in it such great issues for the future, that I am persuaded it is the duty of the House of Commons on this occasion to take the matter out of the hands of the executive government, and to determine that, with regard to the future policy of Canada, we will not ourselves expend the money of the English taxpayers, and not force upon the taxpayers of Canada a burden which, I am satisfied, they will not long continue to bear.

PARNELL

CHARLES STEWART PARNELL, the greatest organizer whom the Irish people have ever known, with the doubtful exception of O'Connell, was born at Avondale, County Wicklow, Ireland, in 1846. His father was a country gentleman of good estate, belonging to an old and well-known Protestant family. Through his mother C. S. Parnell was a grandson of Commodore Stewart of the United States Navy. He was sent to the English University of Cambridge, and for some years after he obtained his baccalaureate degree it seemed likely that he would lead a quiet life on the paternal acres. In 1875, however, he entered Parliament as a supporter of the Home Rule movement, which was at that time directed by Mr. Isaac Butt. Mr. Parnell soon became convinced that Mr. Butt's method of furthering the agitation was academic and futile, and that Englishmen would never listen to Irish claims until they should be compelled to do so by the stoppage of the whole machinery of legislation through parliamentary obstruction. To offering such obstruction he devoted all his efforts, and with such effect as presently to bring from Englishmen as well as Irishmen an admission that he had discovered an almost irresistible instrument of constitutional propaganda. In 1879 he was made President of the Irish Land League, and under the Coercion Act of 1881-82 he was temporarily imprisoned. Thereafter he so thoroughly gained the confidence of his countrymen that at the general election of December, 1885, he succeeded in returning to the House of Commons a compact band of 86 Home Rulers, and thus acquired the balance of power in that body, where the Liberals and the Conservatives were nearly equal in respect of numbers. The outcome of the situation was an alliance between Mr. Parnell and Mr. Gladstone and the latter's introduction of the first Home Rule Bill, which, however, was defeated by the secession of the Unionist-Liberals. Some years later Mr. Parnell was deposed from the leadership of the Irish Nationalist Party by a majority of his followers, owing to his implication in the O'Shea divorce case as co respondent. He was shattered in body as well as spirit by the blow, and died in October, 1891, the year preceding that in which Mr. Gladstone was restored to power with a majority of 40 in the House of Commons. Had Parnell lived and remained the head of an undivided Nationalist party, the majority would probably have been a hundred instead of forty, and the second Home Rule bill, notwithstanding the opposition which it encountered in the House of Lords, would probably have become a law.

AGAINST NONRESIDENT LANDLORDS

FROM THE SPEECH DELIVERED IN ST. LOUIS, MARCH 4, 1880

MR. PRESIDENT AND LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—I thank you for this magnificent meeting—a splendid token of your sympathy and appreciation for the cause of suffering Ireland. It is a remarkable fact that while America, throughout the length and breadth of her country, does her very utmost to show her sympathy and send her practical help to our people; while there is scarcely any hand save America's between the starvation of large masses of the western peasantry, England alone of almost all the civilized nations does scarcely anything, although close beside Ireland, to help the terrible suffering and famine which now oppress that country. I speak a fact when I say that if it had not been for the help which has gone from America during the last two months among these, our people would have perished ere now of starvation. . . .

We are asked: "Why do you not recommend emigration to America?" and we are told that the lands of Ireland are too crowded. The lands of Ireland are not too crowded; they are less thickly populated than those of any civilized country in the world; they are far less thickly populated—the rich lands of Ireland—than any of your Western States. It is only on the barren hillsides of Connemara and along the west Atlantic coast that we have too thick a population, and it is only on the unfertile lands that our people are allowed to live. They are not al-

lowed to occupy and till the rich lands; these rich lands are retained as preserves for landlords, and as vast grazing tracts for cattle. And although emigration might be a temporary alleviation of the trouble in Ireland, it would be a cowardly step on our part; it would be running away from our difficulties in Ireland, and it would be an acknowledgment of the complete conquest of Ireland by England, an acknowledgment which, please God! Ireland shall never make.

No! we will stand by our country, and whether we are exterminated by famine to-day, or decimated by English bayonets to-morrow, the people of Ireland are determined to uphold the God-given right of Ireland—to take her place among the nations of the world. Our tenantry are engaged in a struggle of life and death with the Irish landlords. It is no use to attempt to conceal the issues which have been made there. The landlords say that there is not room for both tenants and landlords, and that the people must go, and the people have said that the landlords must go. But it may—it may, and it undoubtedly will happen in this struggle that some of our gallant tenantry will be driven from their homes and evicted. In that case we will use some of the money with which you are intrusting us in this country for the purpose of finding happier homes in this far western land for those of our expatriated people, and it will place us in a position of great power, and give our people renewed confidence in their struggle, if they are assured that any of them who are evicted in their attempts to stand by their rights will get one hundred and fifty good acres of land in Minnesota, Illinois, or some of your fine Western States.

Now the cable announces to us to-day that the government is about to attempt to renew the famous Irish Coer-

cion acts which expired this year. Let me explain to you what these Coercion acts are. Under them the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is entitled at any time to proclaim in any Irish county, forbidding any inhabitant of that county to go outside of his door after dark, and subjecting him to a long term of imprisonment with hard labor if he is found outside his door after dark. No man is permitted to carry a gun, or to handle arms in his house; and the farmers of Ireland are not even permitted to shoot at the birds when they eat the seed corn on their freshly sowed land. Under these acts it is also possible for the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland to have any man arrested and consigned to prison without charge, and without bringing him to trial; to keep him in prison as long as he pleases; and circumstances have been known where the government has arrested prisoners under these Coercion acts, and has kept them in solitary confinement for two years and not allowed them to see a single relative or to communicate with a friend during all that period, and has finally forgotten the existence of the helpless prisoners. And this is the infamous code which England is now seeking to re-enact. I tell you, when I read this despatch, strongly impressed as I am with the magnitude and vast importance of the work in which we are engaged in this country, that I felt strongly tempted to hurry back to Westminster in order to show this English Government whether it shall dare, in this year 1880, to renew this odious code with as much facility as it has done in former years. We shall then be able to put to a test the newly-forged gagging rules that they have invented for the purpose of depriving the Irish members of freedom of speech. And I wish to express my belief, my firm conviction, that if the Irish members do their duty that it will be impossible

that this infamous statute can be re-enacted; and if it again finds its place upon the statute book, I say that the day upon which the royal assent is given to that Coercion Act will sound the knell of the political future of the Irish people. . . .

And now, I thank you in conclusion for the magnificent service that you are doing for the cause of Ireland. Keep up this work; help to destroy the Irish land system which hangs like a millstone around the necks of our people, and when we have killed the Irish land system we shall have done much to kill English misgovernment in Ireland.

We cannot give up the right of Ireland to be a nation, and although we may devote all our energies to remove the deadly upas tree of Irish landlordism, yet still you will trust us and believe that above and before all we recognize and are determined to work for the right of Ireland to regain her lost nationhood. We believe that Ireland is eminently fitted to take her place among the nations of the world. A people who can boast of such a history as ours; who can boast of martyrs like Robert Emmet, whose memory we celebrate to-day; who have had such leaders as Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Wolfe Tone; whose literature has been enriched by a Davis—I say that such a people has shown that although we may be kept down for a time, we cannot long continue deprived of our rights. And I, for one, feel just as convinced that Ireland will be a nation some day or other, as I feel convinced that in a year or two the last vestiges of landlordism will have disappeared from the face of our country.



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